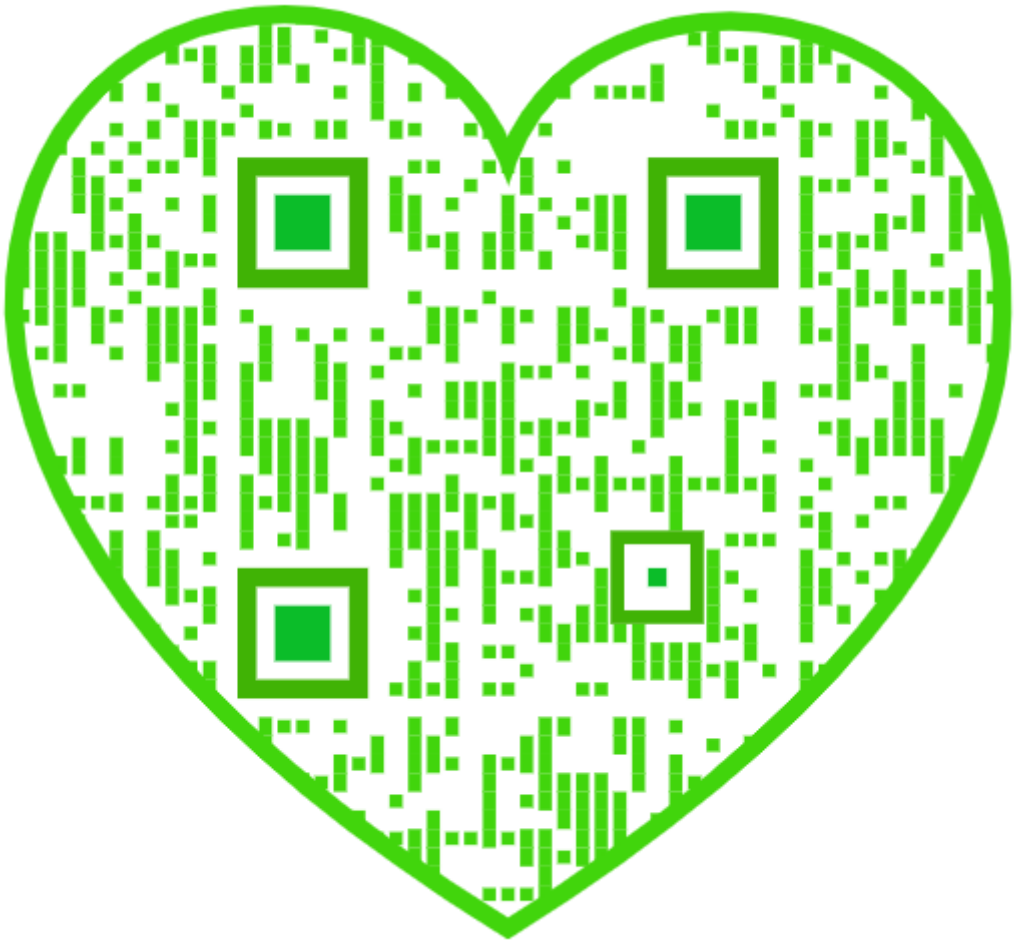
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO
3 1822 01709 3592

rnia
l



WILLIAM MORRIS'S WORKS

Cheaper Issue of the LIBRARY EDITION of Mr. WILLIAM MORRIS'S POETICAL WORKS. Complete in Eleven Volumes, price 5*s.* net each, viz. :—

THE EARTHLY PARADISE. 4 vols., 5*s.* net each.
THE DEFENCE OF GUENEVERE, AND OTHER POEMS. 5*s.* net.
THE LIFE AND DEATH OF JASON. 5*s.* net.
POEMS BY THE WAY: AND LOVE IS ENOUGH. 5*s.* net.
THE STORY OF SIGURD THE VOLSUNG, AND THE FALL OF THE NIBLUNGS. 5*s.* net.
THE ÆNEIDS OF VIRGIL. Done into English Verse. 5*s.* net.
THE ODYSSEY OF HOMER. Done into English Verse. 5*s.* net.
THE TALE OF BEOWULF. Translated by WILLIAM MORRIS and A. J. WYATT. 5*s.* net.

Certain of the POETICAL WORKS may also be had in the following Editions :—

THE EARTHLY PARADISE. POPULAR EDITION in 5 vols., 12mo, 25*s.* or 5*s.* each sold separately.
The same in Ten Parts, 25*s.* or 2*s.* 6*d.* each sold separately.
CHEAP EDITION in 1 vol., 8vo, 6*s.* net.
LOVE IS ENOUGH; OR, THE FREEING OF PHARAMOND. A Morality. Square crown 8vo, 7*s.* 6*d.*
POEMS BY THE WAY. Square crown 8vo, 6*s.*

PROSE WORKS

A TALE OF THE HOUSE OF THE WOLFINGS. Written in Prose and Verse. Square crown 8vo, 6*s.*
THE ROOTS OF THE MOUNTAINS. Written in Prose and Verse. Square crown 8vo, 8*s.*
THE STORY OF THE GLITTERING PLAIN. Square post 8vo, 5*s.* net.
THE WOOD BEYOND THE WORLD. Crown 8vo, 6*s.* net.
THE WELL AT THE WORLD'S END: A Tale. 2 vols. 8vo, 28*s.*
THE WATER OF THE WONDROUS ISLES. Crown 8vo, 7*s.* 6*d.*
THE SUNDERING FLOOD: A Romance. Crown 8vo, 7*s.* 6*d.*
A DREAM OF JOHN BALL, AND A KING'S LESSON. 16mo, 1*s.* 6*d.*
NEWS FROM NOWHERE; OR, AN EPOCH OF REST. Post 8vo, 1*s.* 6*d.*
HOPES AND FEARS FOR ART. Five Lectures. Crown 8vo, 4*s.* 6*d.*
SIGNS OF CHANGE. Seven Lectures. Post 8vo, 4*s.* 6*d.*
AN ADDRESS DELIVERED TO STUDENTS OF THE BIRMINGHAM Municipal School of Art. 8vo, 2*s.* 6*d.* net.
SOME HINTS ON PATTERN-DESIGNING: A Lecture. 8vo, 2*s.* 6*d.* net.
ARCHITECTURE AND HISTORY, AND WESTMINSTER ABBEY. 8vo, 2*s.* 6*d.* net.
ART AND ITS PRODUCERS, AND THE ARTS AND CRAFTS OF TO-DAY. 8vo, 2*s.* 6*d.* net.
ARTS AND CRAFTS ESSAYS by Members of the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society. With a Preface by WILLIAM MORRIS. Crown 8vo, 2*s.* 6*d.* net.
THE STORY OF GRETTIR THE STRONG. Translated from the Icelandic by EIRÍKR MAGNÚSSON and WILLIAM MORRIS. Crown 8vo, 5*s.* net.
THREE NORTHERN LOVE STORIES, AND OTHER TALES. Translated from the Icelandic by EIRÍKR MAGNÚSSON and WILLIAM MORRIS. Crown 8vo, 6*s.* net.

LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.
LONDON, NEW YORK, AND BOMBAY.

ARCHITECTURE, INDUSTRY AND WEALTH

ARCHITECTURE INDUSTRY & WEALTH COLLECTED PAPERS BY WILLIAM MORRIS

LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.
39 PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON
NEW YORK AND BOMBAY
1902

First Collected Edition printed in the Golden type of the Kelmscott Press, July 1902

New Edition. November 1902

CONTENTS

PAGE

I. THE HISTORY OF PATTERN-DESIGNING. A Lecture delivered in Support of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings 1

II. THE LESSER ARTS OF LIFE. A Lecture delivered in Support of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings 37

III. ART, WEALTH, AND RICHES. An Address delivered at a Joint Conversazione of Manchester Societies at the Royal Institution, Manchester, 6th March 1883 80

IV. ART AND SOCIALISM: THE AIMS AND IDEALS OF THE ENGLISH SOCIALISTS OF TO-DAY. A Lecture delivered before the Secular Society of Leicester, 23rd January 1884 105

V. TEXTILE FABRICS. A Lecture delivered at the International Health Exhibition, July 1884 133

VI. ART UNDER PLUTOCRACY. A Lecture delivered at University College, Oxford, 14th November 1883. John Ruskin in the Chair. ("To-Day," February and March 1884) . 164

CONTENTS

PAGE

VII. THE REVIVAL OF ARCHITECTURE. ("Fortnightly Review," May 1888) . . 198

VIII. THE REVIVAL OF HANDICRAFT. ("Fortnightly Review," November 1888) . . . 214

IX. ART AND INDUSTRY IN THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY. ("Time," November 1890) 228

X. THE INFLUENCE OF BUILDING MATERIALS UPON ARCHITECTURE. Delivered before the Art Workers' Guild at Barnard's Inn Hall, London. ("Century Guild Hobby Horse," January 1892) . . . 247

XI. ON THE EXTERNAL COVERINGS OF ROOFS. Written for the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings . . . 265

Architecture, Industry & Wealth

I

THE HISTORY OF PATTERN-DESIGNING

A LECTURE DELIVERED IN SUPPORT OF THE SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF ANCIENT BUILDINGS

To give anything like a history of the art of pattern-designing would be impossible within the limits of one lecture, for it would be doing no less than attempting to tell the whole story of architectural or popular art, a vast and most important subject. All I can pretend to do at present is to call your attention to certain things I have noticed in studying the development of the art of pattern-designing from ancient times to modern, and to hint at certain principles that have seemed to me to lie at the bottom of the practice of that art, and certain tendencies which its long course has had. Even in doing this I know I shall have to touch on difficult matters and take some facts for granted that may be, and have been, much disputed; and I must, therefore, even treating the subject thus, claim your indulgence for a necessary curtness and incompleteness.

I have just used the word modern; so to clear the ground for what follows, I will say that by modern art I do not mean the art of the Victorian era. I need not speak of the art of our own day, because, on the one hand, whatever there is of it that is worth considering is eclectic, and is not bound by the chain of tradition to anything that has gone before us; and, on the other hand, whatever of art is left which is in any sense the result of continuous tradition is, and long has been, so degraded as to have lost any claim to be considered as art at all. The present century has no school of art but such as each man of talent or genius makes for himself to serve his craving for the expression of his thought while he is alive, and to perish with his death. The two preceding centuries had indeed styles, which dominated the practice of art, and allowed it to spread more or less widely over the civilised world; but those styles were not alive and progressive, in spite of the feeling of self-sufficiency with which they were looked on by the artists of those days. When the great masters of the Renaissance were gone, they who, stung by the desire of doing something new, turned their mighty hands to the work of destroying the last remains of living popular art, putting in its place for a while the results of their own wonderful individuality; when these great men were dead, and lesser men of the ordinary type were masquerading in their garments, then at last it was seen what the so-called new birth really was; then we could see that it was the fever of the strong man yearning to accomplish something before his death, not the simple hope of the child, who has long years of life and growth before him. Now the

art, whose sickness this feverish energy marked, is the art which I should call modern art. Its very first roots were spreading when the Roman Empire was tending towards disruption; its last heavily fruited branches were aloft in air when feudal Europe first felt shaken by the coming storm of revolution in Church and State, and the crown of the new holy Roman Empire was on the eve of changing from gold to tinsel. Three great buildings mark its first feeble beginning, its vigorous early life, its last hiding away beneath the rubbish heaps of pedantry and hopelessness. I venture to call those three buildings in their present state, the first the strangest, the second the most beautiful, the third the ugliest of the buildings raised in Europe before the nineteenth century. The first of these is the Palace of Diocletian at Spalato; the second, the Church of S. Sophia at Constantinople; the third, the Church of S. Peter at Rome.

At Spalato the movement of new life was first felt. There is much about the building that is downright ugly, still more that is but a mass of worn-out tradition; but there first, as far as we know, is visible the attempt to throw off the swathings of ill-understood Greek art, with which Roman architecture had encumbered itself, and to make that architecture reasonable, and consistent with the living principles of art. But at Spalato, though the art was trying to be alive, it was scarcely alive, and what life is in it is shown in its construction only, and not in its ornamentation. Our second building, S. Sophia, early as it is in the history of the art, has utterly thrown aside all pedantic encumbrances, and is most vigorously alive. It has gathered to itself all those elements of change, which,

having been kept apart for so long, were at last mingling and seething, and bringing about so many changes, so much of death and life. It is not bound by the past, but it has garnered all that there was in it which was fit to live and produce fresh life; it is the living child and the fruitful mother of art, past and future. That, even more than the loveliness which it drew forth from its own present, is what makes it the crown of all the great buildings of the world.

The new-born art was long in coming to this. Spalato was built about 313 A.D., S. Sophia in 530. More than two hundred years are between them, by no means fertile of beautiful or remarkable buildings; but S. Sophia once built, the earth began to blossom with beautiful buildings, and the thousand years that lie between the date of S. Sophia and the date of S. Peter at Rome may well be called the building age of the world. But when those years were over, in Italy at least, the change was fully come; and, as a symbol of that change, there stood on the site of the great mass of history and art, which was once called the Basilica of S. Peter, that new Church of S. Peter which still curses the mightiest city of the world; the very type, it seems to me, of pride and tyranny, of all that crushes out the love of art in simple people, and makes art a toy of little estimation for the idle hours of the rich and cultivated. Between that time and this, art has been shut up in prison; all I can say of it in that condition is that I hope it has not died there. We can draw no lesson from its prison days save a spurring on to whatsoever of hope and indignant agitation for its release we may each of us be

capable of. As an epoch of art it can teach us nothing; so the nearest possible period to our own days must stand for modern art; and to my mind that is the period between the days of the Emperor Justinian and the Emperor Charles the Fifth; while we must call ancient art all the long period from the beginning of things to the time of Justinian and S. Sophia of Constantinople.

And now I will set about my business of noting certain things which have happened to the very subordinate art of pattern-designing in its various changes, from those earliest days till the time when it was landed amidst that rich and varied time of modern art afore-mentioned. Let us consider what place it held among the ancient peoples, classical and barbarian; you will understand what I mean by those words without pressing home their literal meanings. Broadly speaking, one may say that the use of this subordinate, but by no means unimportant art is to enliven with beauty and incident what would otherwise be a blank space, whereso-ever or whatsoever it may be. The absolute necessities of the art are beauty of colour and restfulness of form. More definite qualities than these it need not have. Its colour may be brought about by the simplest combinations; its form may be merely that of abstract lines or spaces, and need not of necessity have any distinct meaning, or tell any story expressible in words. On the other hand, it is necessary to the purity of the art that its form and colour, when these bear any relation to the facts of nature (as for the more part they do), should be suggestive of such facts, and not descriptive of them.

Now all the art of the ancient historical world is in

a way one, and has similar and sympathetic thoughts to express. I mean that there is a much wider gulf between the ideas of that part of ancient art which comes nearest in thought to modern, than there is between any two parts of ancient art that are furthest from one another. Nevertheless there are wide differences between the art of the different races of the ancient world. Ancient art, in fact, falls naturally into two divisions; the first is archaic, in style at least, if not always in date. It is mostly priestly and symbolic; lacking, willingly or not, the power of expressing natural facts definitely and accurately. It is mystic, wild, and elevated in its spiritual part, its soul; limited, incomplete, often grotesque in its form, its bodily part. The other ancient art is only priestly and symbolic accidentally, and not essentially. I mean that, since this priestly symbolism clung to it, it did not take the trouble to cast it off, but used it and expressed it; but would as willingly and easily have expressed purely intellectual or moral ideas. Furthermore, it is an art of perfection; it has perfectly attained the power of expressing what thoughts it allows itself, and will never forgo any whit of that power, or tolerate any weakness or shortcoming in it. Whatever its soul may be, its body at least it will not have incomplete.

Of the first of these arts, ancient Egypt is the representative; of the second, classical Greece; and we must admit that in each of these systems the art of mere pattern-designing takes but an unimportant place. In Egyptian art, and the school which it represents, the picture-work itself was so limited by rule, so entirely suggestive only, that a certain canon of pro-

portion having been once invented and established, it was easy and effortless work for a people who were full of feeling for quiet beauty; and, moreover, suggestion, not imitation, being the end aimed at, the picture-work easily, and without straining, fulfilled any office of decoration it was put to; so that the story which was necessary to be told on religious or public grounds became the very ornament which, merely as a matter of pleasant colour and line, the eye would most desire. In more modern and less forbearing art the pictured wall is apt to become a window through which a man quietly at work or resting looks on some great tragedy, some sad memory of the past, or terrible threat for the future. The constant companionship of such deeply emotional representations are too apt to trouble us at first, and at last to make us callous, because they are always claiming our attention, whether we are in a mood to be stirred by them or not. But in the older and more suggestive art the great subjects symbolised rather than represented by its pictures, only reached the mind through the eye when the mind was awake and ready to receive them. The wall was a wall still, and not a window; nay, a book rather, where, if you would, you might read the stories of the gods and heroes, and whose characters, whether you read them or not, delighted you always with the beauty of their form and colour. Moreover, the expression of these great things being so well understood and so limited, it was not above the powers of execution of numbers of average workmen, and there was no danger of the holy and elevating subjects being treated absurdly or stupidly, so as to wound the feelings of serious men.

For all these reasons there is in the archaic or suggestive art of the ancients scarce any place for the elaborate pattern-designing which in later times men were driven more or less to put in the place of picture-work, now become more liable to ridiculous and ignoble failure, more exciting to the emotions, less restful, and therefore less beautiful than it had been.

On the other hand, in the perfect art of Greece the tendency was so decidedly towards fact of all kinds, that it could only give a very low place to ornament that had not a quite definite meaning; and its demand for perfection in quality of workmanship deprived effort of all hope of reward in this lower region of art, and crushed all experiment, all invention and imagination. In short, this perfect art preferred blankness to the richness that might be given by the work of an unrefined or imperfectly taught hand, whatever suggestions of beauty or thought might be in it; therefore, as in the art of Egypt picture-work was not thought too good to fill the place of the elaborate pattern-work we are thinking of, so in that of Greece mere emptiness was good enough for the purpose; so that in both cases there was no room for finished and complete pattern-designing; nor was there in any of the schools of ancient art, all of which, as aforesaid, tended either to the Greek or the Egyptian way of looking at things. So you see we are met by this difficulty in the outset, that wishing to see whence our art of pattern-designing has been developed in the ancient world, we find but little of any importance that looks like the seed of it. However, let us look at the matter a little closer, beginning with the art of Egypt. If it had no place for the elaborate

and imaginative pattern-designs of modern art, at any rate it by no means loved blank spaces. Apart from the histories, and the picture-writing which so often cover walls, pillars, and all, even smaller things, kings' robes, musical instruments, ship-sails, and the like, are striped and diapered with variety enough and with abundant fancy, invention, and delicacy. Many of these patterns are familiar to modern art; but to what extent they owe their presence there to the influence of Egypt I do not know, but rather suppose that they are the result of men's invention taking the same path in diverse times and places, and not of direct transmission; and this all the more as I cannot see that Greek pattern-designs follow the Egyptian work closely. One thing certainly strikes one about many of these early designs of Egypt which does connect them with what follows, and that is that they seem distinctly not only Eastern, but even African. Take as an indication of this their love for stripes and chequers, that look as if they were borrowed from the mat-maker's craft, and compare them with the work of African tribes and people, so late as up to our own time. The Egyptian love of colour is also of the East, and their boldness in the use of it, and the ease and success with which they put one bright tint beside another without shading or gradation. On this point it is interesting to note that whatever wilful shortcomings clung to ancient Egypt in its dealings with the higher forms of art, its skill in all handicrafts was a wonder and a lesson to the ancient world. Fourteen hundred years before Christ they understood perfectly what may fairly be called the mysteries of figure-weaving and dyeing, even the more abstruse part of

the last craft, which is now represented by chintz-printing; they were skilled in glass-making and pottery, not merely in the always early-acquired art of making a vessel that shall hold water, but in that of earthenware glazed with an opaque glaze variously coloured and figured; and lastly, they were as skilful joiners and cabinetmakers as their successors of modern Egypt, who are (or were) so clever in making the most of the little scraps of wood which an untimbered country affords them.

With all this, and strange as it may seem, I cannot see that this wonderful art which lasted so many hundred years, which had reached its blossoming time fourteen hundred years before Christ, and was still in use in the second century after, has had much direct or lasting influence on the modern pattern-designer's art. Doubtless these flowers here look as if they might have been the prototypes of many that were drawn in the fourteenth century of our era; but you must remember that, though they are conventional and stiffly drawn, they are parts of a picture, and stand for the assertion that flowers grew in such and such a place. They are not used in mere fancy and sportiveness; which condition of art indeed, as I said before, will be found to be common to all these primitive archaic styles. Scarce anything is drawn which is not meant to tell a definite story; so that many of the members of the elaborate Egyptian diapers are symbols of the mysteries of nature and religion; as, for example, the lotus, the scarab, the winged orb, the hooded and winged serpent.

I suppose that there is no doubt that the gigantic and awful temples of Egypt are the earliest columnar

buildings of which the world knows; nevertheless, I cannot think that the columnar Greek temple was derived from them, whatever of detail the Greeks borrowed frankly and obviously from them. The enormous and terrible scale on which they are designed, and especially the battering in of walls and door-jambs, which adds such gloom to these primeval buildings, surely shows that one at least, and that the most venerated, of the types of the Egyptian temple was a cave, and that their pillars are the masses left to support the huge weight of the hillside; while, on the other hand, it is not easy to doubt that timber-building was the origin of the Greek temple. The Greek pillar was a wooden post, its lintel a timber beam, and the whole building a holy memory of the earlier days of the race and the little wooden hall that housed the great men and gods of the tribe. Nevertheless, the two forms of capital which have gone round the world, the cushion or lotus-bud form, and the bell-shaped or open-lily form, are certainly the forms of Egyptian capitals, nor has any other radical form been invented in architecture, or perhaps can be. Whether these have been taken consciously or unconsciously from the first finished art of the world who can affirm or deny?

Now before we venture to insult the aristocratically perfect art of Periclean Greece by making an important matter of what it despised, and trying to connect the work of its hewers of wood and drawers of water with the crafts of modern Europe, let us look a little into the art of another river-valley, the land between Tigris and Euphrates. This art is important enough to our immediate subject, quite

apart from the wonderful historical interest of the great empires that ruled there; but there are left no such riches of antiquity to help us as in Egypt. Of Babylon, who was the mother of the arts of those regions, there is but little left, and that little not of the art in which she most excelled. What is left, joined to the derived art of Assyria, which is almost all that represents the earlier Babylonian art, seems to show us that if more yet had survived we might be nearer to solving the question of the origin of a great part of our pattern-designs; and this all the more as colour was an essential of its master-art. The Babylonians built in brick (sunburnt much of it), and ornamented their wall-spaces with painted pottery, which (taking the whole story into consideration) must surely have been the source from which flowed all the art of pottery of Persia, and the kindred or neighbour lands of the East. From the very nature of this art, there are but a few scraps of it left, as I have said, and Assyrian art must fill the gap for us as well as it can. The great slabs of alabaster with which that people decorated the palaces raised on their mounds of sunburnt bricks, these things with which we are so familiar, that we are almost likely to forget the wonder that lies in them, tell us without a doubt what the type of Mesopotamian art was. It had started, like that of Egypt, from the archaic and priestly idea of art; but, in Assyrian days at least, had grown less venerable and more realistic, less beautiful also, and, if one may say so, possessed by a certain truculence both of form and spirit, which expresses well enough the ceaseless violence and robbery which is all that we have recorded of the history of Assyria. Its pattern-

designing takes a lower place than that of Egypt, as far as we can judge in the absence or decay of what colour it once had. Its system of colour (one must needs judge from the fragments remaining) showed no great love for that side of the art, and was used rather to help the realism to which it tended, and which, had it lived longer, would most likely have driven it out of the path of monumental and decorative art. Nevertheless, by strange accidents in the course of history, there are some of the forms of its decoration that have been carried forward into the general mass of civilised art. A great part of its patterns, indeed, were diapers or powderings, like much of Egyptian work, only carried out in a bossy, rounded kind of relief, characteristic enough of its general tendencies. These minor and natural forms died out with the Assyrian monarchy; but several of its borderings were borrowed by the Greeks, doubtless through the Asiatic traders, who on their own wares seem to have used both Egyptian and Chaldean mythological figures without understanding their meaning, simply because they made pretty ornaments for a bowl or a vase. As an example of these running patterns, take the interlacement which we now nickname the guilloche, or the ornament called the honeysuckle, which I rather suppose to be a suggestion of a tuft of flowers and leaves breaking through the earth, and which learned men think had a mystical meaning beyond that simple idea, like that other bordering, which, for want of a better name, I must call the flower and pine-cone.

There is another mystical ornament which we first come upon in Assyrian art, which we shall have to come to again, but which I must mention here, and

which has played a strangely important part in the history of pattern-designing; this is the Holy Tree with its attendant guardian angels or demons. Almost all original styles have used this form; some, doubtless, as a religious symbol, most driven by vague tradition and allured by its convenience as a decorative form. I should call it the most important and widely spread piece of ornament ever invented.

Again, before we affront the majesty of Pallas Athene by looking curiously at her sleeve-hem, rather than reverently at herself, I must say a word about the conquerors of Assyria, the Persians. To us pattern-designers, Persia has become a holy land, for there in the process of time our art was perfected, and thence above all places it spread to cover for a while the world, east and west. But in the hierarchy of ancient art the place of Persia is not high; its sculpture was borrowed directly from Assyrian and Babylonian art, and has not the life and vigour of its prototype; though some gain it has of architectural dignity, which the Aryan stock of the Persians accounts for, I think. Still more is this shown in the leap the Persians took in architecture proper. The palaces of the Assyrian kings do not know, or do not use the column; they are one and all a congeries of not very large chambers connected by doors very oddly placed. How they were roofed we can no longer tell; probably the smaller chambers had some kind of dome for a roof, and the larger no roof, only a sort of ledge projecting from the wall. The palace of the ancient Persians, on the other hand, was fairly made up of columns; the walls could not have been of much importance; the whole thing is as a forest of pillars that upholds the canopy over the

summer-seat of the great king. For the rest, though this is the work of an Aryan race, that race had far to go and much to suffer before they could attain to the measured, grave, and orderly beauty which they alone of all races have learned to create, before they could attain to the divine art of reasonable architecture. The majesty of the ancient Persian columnar building is marred by extravagance and grotesquery of detail, which must be called ugliness; faults which it shares with the ancient architecture of India, of the earlier form of which it must have been an offshoot.

We have thus touched, lightly enough, on the principal styles of the archaic type of art; and have seen that our craft of pattern-designing was developed but slowly among them, and that, with few exceptions, its forms did not travel very far on the road of history. We are now come to that period of perfection which, as it were, draws a bar of light across the history of art, and is apt to dazzle us and blind us to all that lies on either side of it. As we pass from the Egyptian and Assyrian rooms at the British Museum and come upon the great groups of the Parthenon, full as we may be of admiration for the nobility of the Egyptian monuments, and the eager and struggling realism of Assyria, how our wonder rises as we look on the perfection of sculpture, cut off as it seems by an impassable gulf from all that has gone before it, the hopeless limitations, or the hopeless endeavours of the great mass of mankind! Nor can we help asking ourselves the question if art can go any further, or what there is to do after such work. Indeed the question is a hard one, and aftertimes of art, and even many cultivated people of to-day, may be blamed but lightly if

they, in their helplessness, must needs answer: There is nothing to do but to imitate, and again to imitate, and to pick up what style the gods may give us amidst our imitation, even if we are driven to imitate the imitators. And yet, I must ask you above all things to join me in thinking that the question must be answered in quite a different way from this, unless we are to be for ever the barbarians which the Athenians of the time of Pericles would certainly, and not so wrongly, have called us; for to me these works of perfection do not express everything which the archaic work suggested, and which they might have expressed if they had dared to try it: still less do they express all that the later work strove to express, often maybe with halting skill, seldom without some vision of the essence of things; which would have been lost to us for ever had they waited for the day, never to come, when the hand of man shall be equal to his thought, and no skill be lacking him to tell us of the height and depth of his aspirations. No, even these men of Ancient Greece had their limitations, nor was it altogether better with them than it is with us; the freedom of these free people was a narrow freedom. True, they lived a simple life, and did not know of that great curse and bane of art which we call luxury: yet was their society founded on slavery; slavery, mental as well as bodily, of the greater part of mankind, the iron exclusiveness which first bound their society, after no long while unsettled it, and at last destroyed it. When we think of all that classical art represents, and all that it hides and buries, of its pretensions and its shortcomings, surely we shall not accuse the Fates too loudly of blindness for overthrowing it, or think that the confusion and misery of

the times that followed it was too great a price to pay for fresh life and its token, change of the forms of art which express men's thoughts.

Now if you should think I have got on to matters over serious for our small subject of pattern-designing, I will say, first, that even these lesser arts, being produced by man's intelligence, cannot really be separated from the greater, the more purely intellectual ones, or from the life which creates both; and next, that to my mind the tokens of the incompleteness of freedom among the classical peoples, and their aristocratic and rigid exclusiveness, are as obvious in one side of their art, as their glorious simplicity of life and respect for individuality of mind among the favoured few are obvious in the other side of it; and it is in our subject matter of to-day that their worser part shows.

The pattern-designs of Greek art, under a system which forbade any meddling with figure-work by men who could not draw the human figure unexceptionably, must have been the main resource of their lower artists, what we call artisans; they are generally, though not always, thoroughly well fitted for the purpose of decoration which they are meant to serve, but neither are, nor pretend to be, of any interest in themselves: they are graceful, indeed, where the Assyrian ones are clumsy, temperate where those of Egypt are over florid; but they have not, and do not pretend to have, any share of the richness, the mastery, or the individuality of nature, as much of the ornament of the earlier periods, and most of that of the later, has had. I must ask you not to misunderstand me, and suppose that I think lightly of the necessity for the due and even severe subordination of architectural ornament;

what I do want you to understand is, that the constant demand which Greek art made for perfection on every side was not an unmixed gain to it, for it made renunciation of many delightful things a necessity, and not unseldom drove it into being hard and unsympathetic. Of the system of Greek colour we can know very little, from the scanty remains that are left us. I think they painted much of their carving and sculpture in a way that would rather frighten our good taste—to hear of, I mean, though probably not to see. Some people, on the other hand, have supposed that they were all but colour-blind, a guess that we need not discuss at great length. What is to be said of it is, that certain words which to us express definite tints of colour are used in their literature, and that of Rome which imitated it, in such a way as to show that they noticed the difference between tones of colours more than that between tints. For the rest, it would be unreasonable to suppose that a people who despised the lesser arts, and who were on the look-out, first for scientific and historic facts, and next for beauty of form, should give themselves up to indulgence in the refinements of colour. The two conditions of mind are incompatible.

As to what the development of pattern-designs owes to Greek art, all that side of the craft which, coming directly and consciously from classical civilisation, has helped to form the ornament of modern architecture, has, whoever invented the patterns, originally passed through the severe school of Greece, and thus been transmitted to us. Of all these ornamental forms the most important is that we choose to call the acanthus leaf, which was borne forward with the complete de-

velopment of the column and capital. As I have said before, the form of the timber hall, with its low-pitched roof, its ports and beams, had got to be considered a holy form by the Greeks, and they did not care to carry dignified architecture further, or invent any more elaborate form of construction; but the prodigious care they took in refining the column with its cushion, or horned, or bell-shaped capital, impressed those forms on the world for ever, and especially the last of these, the bell-shaped one, whose special ornament was this glittering leafage we now call acanthus. No form of ornament has gone so far, or lasted so long as this; it has been infinitely varied, used by almost all following styles in one shape or another, and performed many another office besides its original one.

Now this question of the transmission of the forms of Greek architecture leads us at once to thinking of that of Rome, since it was by this road that all of it went which was consciously accepted as a gift of the classical times. The subject of the origin of all that is characteristic in Roman art is obscure enough, much too obscure for my little knowledge even to attempt to see into it; nay, even in speaking of it, I had better call it the art of the peoples collected under the Roman name, so that I may be understood to include all the influences that went to its creation. Now if we are asked what impression the gathered art of these peoples made upon modern art, I see nothing for it but to say that it invented architecture; no less. Before their time, indeed, temples took such and such forms among diverse nations, and such and such ornament grew on them; but what else was done with these styles we really do not know; a frivolous pleasure-town built

in a late period, and situate in Italy, which destruction, so to say, has preserved for us, being the only token left to show what a Greek house might perhaps have been like. For the rest, in spite of all the wonders of Greek sculpture, we must needs think that the Greeks had done little to fix the future architecture of the world: there was no elasticity or power of growth about the style; right in its own country, used for the worship and aspirations which first gave it birth, it could not be used for anything else. But with the architecture of the men of the Roman name it was quite different. In the first place they seized on the great invention of the arch, the most important invention to house-needing men that has been, or can be made. They did not invent it themselves of course, since it was known in ancient Egypt, and apparently not uncommon in brick-building Babylonia; but they were the first who used it otherwise than as an ugly necessity, and, in so using it, they settled what the architecture of civilisation must henceforward be. Nor was their architecture, stately as it was, any longer fit for nothing but a temple, a holy railing for the shrine or symbol of the god; it was fit for one purpose as for another—church, house, aqueduct, market-place, or castle; nor was it the style of one country or one climate: it would fit itself to north or south, snow-storm or sand-storm alike. Though pedants might make inflexible rules for its practice when it was dead or dying, when it was alive it did not bind itself too strictly to rule, but followed, in its constructive part at least, the law of nature; in short, it was a new art, the great art of civilisation.

True it is that what we have been saying of it

applies to it as a style of building chiefly; in matters of ornament the arts of the conquered did completely take the conqueror captive, and not till the glory of Rome was waning, and its dominion become a tax-gathering machine, did it even begin to strive to shake off the fetters of Greece; and still, through all those centuries, the Roman lords of the world thought the little timber god's-house a holy form, and necessary to be impressed on all stately architecture. It is a matter of course that the part of the architectural ornament of the Romans which may be definitely called pattern-design shared fully in this slavery; it was altered and somewhat spoiled Greek work, less refined and less forbearing. Great swinging scrolls, mostly formed of the acanthus foliage, not very various or delicate in their growth, mingled with heavy rolling flowers, form the main part of the Roman pattern-design that clave to the arts. There is no mystery in them, and little interest in their growth, though they are rich and handsome; indeed they scarcely do grow at all, they are rather stuck together; for the real connected pattern where one member grows naturally and necessarily out of another, where the whole thing is alive as a real tree or flower is, all this is an invention of what followed Roman art, and is unknown both to the classical and the ancient world. Nevertheless, this invention, when it came, clothed its soul in a body which was chiefly formed of the Graeco-Roman ornament, so that this splendid Roman scroll-work, though not very beautiful in itself, is the parent of very beautiful things. It is perhaps in the noble craft of the mosaic, which is a special craft of the Roman name, that the foreshadowing of the new art is best seen. In the remains of this

art you may note the growing formation of more mysterious and more connected, as well as freer and more naturalistic design; their colour, often in spite of the limitation forced on the workman by simple materials, is skilfully arranged and beautiful; and, in short, there is a sign in them of the coming of the wave of that great change which was to turn late Roman art, the last of the old, into Byzantine art, the first of the new.

It lingered long. For long there was still some show of life in the sick art of the older world; that art had been so powerful, so systematised, that it was not easy to get rid even of its dead body. The first stirrings of change were felt in the master-art of architecture, or, once more, in the art of building. As I said before in speaking of the earliest building that shows this movement, the Palace at Spalato, the ornamental side of the art lagged long behind the constructional. In that building you see for the first time the arch acting freely, and without the sham support of the Greek beam-architecture; henceforth, the five orders are but pieces of history, until the time when they were used by the new pedants of the Renaissance to enslave the world again.

Note now, that this first change of architecture marks a new world and new thoughts arising. Diocletian's palace was built but a few years before the Roman tyranny was rent in twain. When it was raised, that which men thought would last for ever had been already smitten with its death-stroke. Let your minds go back through all the centuries to look on the years that followed, and see how the whole world is changing; unheard of peoples thrusting on into Europe; nation mingling with nation, and blood

with blood; the old classical exclusiveness is gone for ever. Greek, Roman, Barbarian, are words still used, but the old meaning has departed from them; nay, even, they may mean pretty much the reverse of what they did. Dacians, Armenians, Arabs, Goths; from these come the captains of the Roman name; and when the Roman army goes afield, marching now as often to defeat as victory, it may well be that no Italian goes in its ranks to meet the enemies of Rome. More wonder is it, therefore, that the forms of the old world clave so close to art, than that a new art was slowly and unobtrusively getting ready to meet the new thoughts and aspirations of mankind; that modern art was near its birth, though modern Europe was born before its art was born.

Meanwhile let us turn aside from Europe to look for a little at the new birth of an ancient nation—Persia, to wit; and see what part it took in carrying on the forms of decoration from the old world into the new. I will ask you to remember that, after the contest between Persia and Greece had been ended by Alexander, and when his dream of a vast European-Asiatic Empire, infused throughout with Hellenic thought and life, had but brought about various knots of anarchical and self-seeking tyrannies, a new and masterful people changed the story; and Persia, with the surrounding countries, fell under the dominion of the Parthians, a people of a race whose office in the furthering of civilisation is perhaps the punishment of its crimes. The ancient Parthians, like the modern Ottomans, scarcely mingled with the nations which they conquered, but rather encamped among them. Like the Ottomans, also, the decline of their warlike

powers by no means kept pace with the decline of their powers of rule, or the steady advance of their inevitable doom. Artabanus, the last of the Parthian kings, turned from the victorious field of Nisibis, where he had overcome the men of the Roman name, to meet the rising of his Persian subjects; which, in three days of bloody battle, swept away his life and the dominion of his race. A curious lesson, by the way, to warring tyrannies. The Roman Empire had contended long with the Parthian kingdom, had wrested many a province from it, and weakened it sorely, all for this, that it might give birth to the greatest and most dangerous enemy of the Roman Empire, and one who was soon to humiliate it so grievously.

Now as to the art of these kingdoms. That of the Parthians must be set aside by treating it in the way which was used by the worthy Norwegian merchant in writing of the snakes in Iceland; there was no art among the Parthians, no native art, that is to say, and scarcely any borrowed art which they made quasi-native. In earlier times Greek hands fashioned their coins and such-like matters; in later they borrowed their art from the borrowed art of their Persian subjects, with whom, doubtless, they were often confused by classical writers. Neither can I say that of the art of the new-born Persian kingdom there is much left that is important in itself. I have said that much of the art of Achaemenian Persia was borrowed directly from Assyria, its wild and strange columnar architecture being the only part of it that seems to bear any relation to the Aryan race. For three hundred and fifty years the Persians lay under the domination of Turan, and certainly, to judge from what we know of

their architecture during and after that time, they were not receptive of ideas from other branches of their race.

The most notable works of the new-born or Sassanian Kingdom of Persia are certain rock-sculptured monuments of diverse dates, the earliest being that which commemorates Sapor the Great, and his triumph over the Roman Emperor Valerian, which happened in 260, only forty years after Artaxerxes, the first Sassanian king, had overthrown and slain the last of the Parthians on the field of Hormuz. To my mind these sculptures still show the influence of that Assyrian or Chaldean art, which is the first form that art took in Persia, though they are by no means lacking in original feeling, and are obviously and most interestingly careful in matters of costume, the Romans being dressed as Romans, and the Persians in their national dress; the chief difference between this and the costume of the Achaemenian time being in the strange and, I suppose, symbolical head-dress of Sapor himself, who wears over his crown an enormous globe, seemingly made of some light material inflated. There is no mere ornamental detail in these sculptures; but in a monument to Chosroes the Second, whose reign began in 590, there is a good deal of it; and in this the Chaldean influence is unmistakable, and all the more marked, since it is mingled with visible imitation of late Roman figure-sculpture as well as with inferior work of the kind found in Sapor's monument. The existence of this Chaldean influence is all the more important to note because of its late date.

Besides these sculptured works, there are also left in Persia and Mesopotamia some remains of important Sassanian buildings, which, however scanty, are of great

interest. To what earlier style is due the origin of their characteristic features it would be impossible to say; but one thing is clear to me, that some of those features at least have been fixed on modern Persian architecture; as, for example, the egg-shaped dome, and the great cavernous porch with the small doorway pierced in its inside wall, both of which features are special characteristics of that modern Persian architecture which is in fact the art of the Mussulman world. A word must be said further on a feature of the Sassanian architecture that lies nearer to our subject, the capitals of columns still existing. The outline of these is curiously like that of fully developed Byzantine architecture; the carved ornament on them is in various degrees influenced by ancient Chaldean art, being in some cases identical with the later Assyrian pattern-work, in others mingled with impressions of Roman ornament; but the general effect of them in any case shows a very remarkable likeness to the ruder capitals of the time of Justinian, more especially to his work at Ravenna, a fact to be carefully noted in connection with the development of that art.

Some very rich and lovely architectural carving at the palace of Mashita, wrought late in the Sassanian time, about 630, bears a strong resemblance to elaborate Byzantine work at its best; it might almost be work of Comnenian Greeks at Venice or Milan: nevertheless, and this also I beg you to remember, it is as like as possible to designs on carpets and tiles done nearly a thousand years after the battle of Cadesia, under the rule of Shah Abbas the Great. Furthermore, I believe the Persians have preserved and handed down to later ages certain forms of

ornament which, above all, must be considered parts of pattern-designing, and which have clung to that art with singular tenacity. These forms are variations of the mystic symbols of the Holy Tree, and the Holy Fire. The subject of the shapes these have taken, and the reasons for their use and the diversities of them, is a difficult and obscure one; so I must, before I go further, remind you that I lay no claims to mythological and ethnological learning, and if I blunder while I touch on these subjects (as I cannot help doing) I shall be very glad of correction from any one who understands this recondite subject.

However, what I have noticed of these in my studies as a pattern-designer is this. There are two symbols; the one is a tree, more or less elaborately blossomed, and supported, as heralds say, by two living creatures, genii, partly or wholly man-like, or animals, sometimes of known kinds, lions or the like, sometimes invented monsters; the other symbol is an altar with a flame upon it, supported by two living creatures, sometimes man-like, sometimes beast-like. Now these two symbols are found, one or other, or both of them, in almost all periods of art; the lion gate at Mycenae will occur to all of you as one example. I have seen a very clear example figured, which is on a pot found in Attica, of the very earliest period. The Holy Tree is common in Assyrian art, the Holy Fire is found in it. The Holy Fire with the attendant figures, priests in this case always, is on the coins of all the Sassanian kings; the Holy Tree, supported by lions, is found in Sassanian art also. Now it is clear that the two symbols are apt to become so much alike in rude representations that sometimes it is hard to say whether

the supporters have the tree or the fire-altar between them; and this seems to have puzzled those who used them after the Sassanian period, when, doubtless, they had forgotten or perverted their original meaning. They are used very often in Byzantine art in carvings and the like, where again they sometimes take another form of peacocks drinking from a fountain; but of all things are commonest perhaps in the silken stuffs that were wrought in Greece, Syria, Egypt, and at last in Sicily and Lucca, between the eleventh and the fifteenth centuries. In these, at first, it was a toss-up whether the thing between the creatures should be the altar or the tree, though the latter was always commonest; but at last the tree won the day, I imagine rather because it was prettier than for any more abstruse reason; still, even in quite late times, the fire crops up again at whiles. I should mention also, that in these later representations man-like figures are seldom, if ever, seen; beasts of all kinds, from giraffes to barn-door fowls, take their place.

It would be absurd of me to attempt to be authoritative as to the meaning of these far-travelling symbols; but I may perhaps be allowed to say that both the fire and the tree are symbols of life and creation, and that, when the central object is obviously a fire, the supporters are either ministers of the altar or guardian spirits. As to the monsters supporting the tree, they also, I suppose, may be guardians. I have, however, seen a different guess at their meaning; to wit, that they represent the opposing powers of good and evil that form the leading idea of the dualism that fixed itself to the ancient Zoroastrian creed, the creed in which the Light and the Fire had become the recog-

nised symbol of deity by the time of the Sassanian monarchs. I cannot pretend to say what foundation there may be for this theory, which would fuse the two symbols into one. The only thing I feel pretty certain of is this: that whatever the forms may mean, they are never found but among peoples who, it may be at the end of a very long chain, have had some dealings with the country between the two Rivers; that they therefore are Chaldean in origin; that, though they have been transmitted by other means in earlier days, it is to the Sassanian Persians that we owe their presence in modern art. But it is not difficult to see that such an incomplete and even languid art as that of new-born Persia, which had but little character of its own, at any rate on its ornamental side, would have had no strength to carry these strange figures so far; figures which, I repeat, have played a greater part than any others among the pattern-designs of Europe and the East, however those who used them might be unconscious of their meaning. It was on another and mightier art that they were borne. The influence of Persia, indeed, was felt amongst a people ready to receive it, in a time that was agape to take in something new to fill the void which the death of classical art had made; but other influences were at work among the people whose mother city was New Rome, which was a kind of knot to all the many thrums of the varied life of the first days of modern Europe.

While men slept a new art was growing up in that strange empire, on which so many centuries of change still thrust the name of Rome, although the deeds and power of Rome were gone from it. Many

of you have doubtless heard this art spoken of with contempt as the mere dregs of the dying art of the ancient world. Well, doubtless death was busy among what was left of the art of antiquity, but it was a death that bore new quickening with it; it was a corruption which was drawing to it elements of life of which the classical world knew nothing; and the chief element of life that it gave expression to was freedom, the freedom of the many, in the realm of art at least. In the earlier days the workman had nought to do but to grind through his day's work, stick tightly to his gauge lest he be beaten or starved, and then go; but now he was rising under the load of contempt that crushed him, and could do something that people would stop to look at no less than the more intellectual work of his better-born fellow. What has come of that in later times, nay, what may yet come of it in days that we shall not live to see, we may not consider now. But one thing came of it in those earlier days; an architecture which was pure in its principles, reasonable in its practice, and beautiful to the eyes of all men, even the simplest; which is a thing, mind you, which can never exist in any state of society under which men are divided into intellectual castes.

It was a matter of course that the art of pattern-designing should fully share in this exaltation of the master art. Now at last, and only now, it began to be really delightful in itself; good reason why, since now at last the mind of a man happy in his work did more or less guide all hands that wrought it. No beauty in the art has ever surpassed the beauty of those its first days of joy and freedom; the days of

gain without loss, the time of boundless hope. I say of gain without loss; the qualities of all the past styles which had built it up are there, with all that it has gained of new. The great rolling curves of the Roman acanthus have not been forgotten, but they have had life, growth, variety, and refinement infused into them; the clean-cut accuracy and justness of line of one side of Greek ornament has not been forgotten either, nor the straying wreath-like naturalism of the other side of it; but the first has gained a crisp sparkling richness, and a freedom and suggestion of nature which it had lacked before; and the second, which was apt to be feeble and languid, has gained a knitting-up of its lines into strength, and an interest in every curve, which make it like the choice parts of the very growths of nature. Other gain it has of richness and mystery, the most necessary of all the qualities of pattern-work, that without which, indeed, it must be kept in the strictly subordinate place which the scientific good taste of Greece allotted to it. Where did it get those qualities from? If the art of the East had been what it has since become, we might perhaps answer, from the East; but this is by no means the case. On the contrary, though, as I have said or implied above, Byzantine art borrowed forms from Persia and Chaldea at the back of her, nothing is more certain, to my mind, than that Byzantine art made Eastern art what it became; that the art of the East has remained beautiful so long because for so many centuries it practised the lessons which New Rome first taught it. Indeed, I think the East had much to do with the new life of this true Renaissance, but indirectly. The influence of its thought, its strange

mysticism that gave birth to such wild creeds, its looking towards equality amidst all the tyranny of kings that crushed all men alike; these things must have had then, and long before, great influence on men's thoughts at the verge of Europe and Asia.

But surely, when we have sought our utmost for the origins of all the forms of that great body of the expression of men's thoughts which I have called modern art (you may call it Gothic art if you will, little as the Goths dealt with it), when we have sought and found much, we shall still have to confess that there is no visible origin for the thing that gave life to those forms. All we can say is that when the Roman tyranny grew sick, when that recurring curse of the world, a dominant race, began for a time to be shaken from its hold, men began to long for the freedom of art; and that, even amidst the confusion and rudeness of a time when one civilisation was breaking up that another might be born of it, the mighty impulse which this longing gave to the expression of thought created speedily a glorious art, full of growth and hope, in the only form which in such a time art could take, architecture to wit; which, of all the forms of art, is that which springs direct from popular impulse, from the partnership of all men, great and little, in worthy and exalting aspirations.

So was modern or Gothic art created; and never, till the time of that death or cataleptic sleep of the so-called Renaissance, did it forget its origin, or fail altogether in fulfilling its mission of turning the ancient curse of labour into something more like a blessing. As to the way in which it did its work, as I have no time, so also I have but little need to speak,

since there is none of us but has seen and felt some portion of the glory which is left behind, but has shared some portion of that most kind gift it gave the world; for even in this our turbulent island, the home of rough and homely men, so far away from the centres of art and thought which I have been speaking of, did simple folk labour for those that should come after them. Here, in the land we yet love, they built their homes and temples; if not so majestically as many peoples have done, yet in such sweet accord with the familiar nature amidst which they dwelt, that when by some happy chance we come across the work they wrought, untouched by any but natural change, it fills us with a satisfying untroubled happiness that few things else could bring us. Must our necessities destroy, must our restless ambition mar, the sources of this innocent pleasure, which rich and poor may share alike, this communion with the very hearts of departed men? Must we sweep away these touching memories of our stout forefathers and their troublous days, that won our present peace and liberties? If our necessities compel us to it, I say we are an unhappy people; if our vanity lure us into it, I say we are a foolish and light-minded people, who have not the wits to take a little trouble to avoid spoiling our own goods. Our own goods? Yes, the goods of the people of England, now and in time to come; we who are now alive are but life-renters of them. Any of us who pretend to any culture know well that, in destroying or injuring one of these buildings, we are destroying the pleasure, the culture, in a word, the humanity of unborn generations. It is speaking very mildly to say that we have no right to do this for our temporary

convenience; it is speaking too mildly. I say any such destruction is an act of brutal dishonesty. Do you think such a caution is unnecessary? how I wish that I could think so! It is a grievous thing to have to say, but say it I must, that the one most beautiful city of England, the city of Oxford, has been ravaged for many years past, not only by ignorant and interested tradesmen, but by the University and College authorities. Those whose special business it is to direct the culture of the nation have treated the beauty of Oxford as if it were a matter of no moment, as if their commercial interests might thrust it aside without any consideration. To my mind in so doing they have disgraced themselves.

For the rest, I will say it, that I think the poor remains of our ancient buildings in themselves, as memorials of history and works of art, are worth more than any temporary use they can be put to. Yes, apply it to Oxford if you please. There are many places in England where a young man may get as good book-learning as in Oxford; not one where he can receive the education which the loveliness of the grey city used to give us. Call this sentiment if you please, but you know that it is true. Before I go further let me tell you that our Society has had much to do in cases of what I should call the commercial destruction of buildings; that we have carefully examined these cases to see if we had any ground to stand on for resisting the destruction; that we have argued the matter threadbare on all sides; and that above all we have always tried to suggest some possible use that the buildings could be put to. As a branch of this subject, I must ask leave to add, at the risk of

wearying you, that the Society has taken great pains (and been sometimes called rude for it, if that mattered) to try to get guardians of ancient buildings to repair their buildings. For we know well, by doleful experience, how quickly a building gets infirm if it be neglected. There are plenty of cases where a parish or a parson will spend two or three thousand pounds on ecclesiastical finery for a church, and let the rain sap the roof all the while; such things are apt to make the most polite people rude.

I have one last word to say on the before-mentioned restless vanity that so often mars the gift our fathers have given us. Its results have a technical name now, and are called Restoration. Don't be afraid. I am going to say very little about it; my plea against it is very simple. I have pleaded it before, but it seems to me so unanswerable that I will do so again, even if it be in the same words. Yet first let me say this: I love art, and I love history; but it is living art and living history that I love. If we have no hope for the future, I do not see how we can look back on the past with pleasure. If we are to be less than men in time to come, let us forget that we have ever been men. It is in the interest of living art and living history that I oppose so-called restoration. What history can there be in a building bedaubed with ornament, which cannot at the best be anything but a hopeless and lifeless imitation of the hope and vigour of the earlier world? As to the art that is concerned in it, a strange folly it seems to me for us who live among these bricken masses of hideousness to waste the energies of our short lives in feebly trying to add new beauty to what is already beautiful.

Is that all the surgery we have for the curing of England's spreading sore? Don't let us vex ourselves to cure the antepenultimate blunders of the world, but fall to on our own blunders. Let us leave the dead alone, and, ourselves living, build for the living and those that shall live.

Meantime, my plea for our Society is this, that since it is disputed whether restoration be good or not, and since we are confessedly living in a time when architecture has come on the one hand to jerry-building, and on the other to experimental designing (good, very good experiments some of them), let us take breath and wait; let us sedulously repair our ancient buildings, and watch every stone of them as if they were built of jewels (as indeed they are), but otherwise let the dispute rest till we have once more learned architecture, till we once more have among us a reasonable, noble, and universally used style. Then let the dispute be settled. I am not afraid of the issue. If that day ever comes, we shall know what beauty, romance, and history mean, and the technical meaning of the word restoration will be forgotten. Is not this a reasonable plea? It means prudence. If the buildings are not worth anything they are not worth restoring; if they are worth anything, they are at least worth treating with common sense and prudence. Come now, I invite you to support the most prudent Society in all England.

II

THE LESSER ARTS OF LIFE

A LECTURE DELIVERED IN SUPPORT OF THE SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF ANCIENT BUILDINGS

THE Lesser Arts of Life may not seem to some of you worth considering, even for an hour. In these brisk days of the world, amidst this high civilisation of ours, we are too eager and busy, it may be said, to take note of any form of art that does not either stir our emotions deeply, or strain the attention of the most intellectual part of our minds. Now for this rejection of the lesser arts there may be something to be said, supposing it be done in a certain way and with certain ends in view; nevertheless it seems to me that the lesser arts, when they are rejected, are so treated for no sufficient reason, and to the injury of the community; therefore I feel no shame in standing before you as a professed pleader and advocate for them, as indeed I well may, since it is through them that I am the servant of the public, and earn my living with abundant pleasure.

Then comes the question, What are to be considered the Lesser Arts of Life? I suppose there might be pros and cons argued on that question, but I doubt if the argument would be worth the time

and trouble it would cost; nevertheless I want you to agree with me in thinking that these lesser arts are really a part of the greater ones which only a man or two here and there (among cultivated people) will venture to acknowledge that he contemns, whatever the real state of the case may be on that matter. The Greater Arts of Life, what are they? Since people may use the word in very different senses, I will say, without pretending to give a definition, that what I mean by an art is some creation of man which appeals to his emotions and his intellect by means of his senses. All the greater arts appeal directly to that intricate combination of intuitive perceptions, feelings, experience, and memory which is called imagination. All artists, who deal with those arts, have these qualities superabundantly, and have them balanced in such exquisite order that they can use them for purposes of creation. But we must never forget that all men who are not naturally deficient, or who have not been spoiled by defective or perverse education, have imagination in some measure, and also have some of the order which guides it; so that they also are partakers of the greater arts, and the masters of them have not to speak under their breath to half-a-dozen chosen men, but rather their due audience is the whole race of man properly and healthily developed. But as you know, the race of man, even when very moderately civilised, has a great number of wants which have to be satisfied by the organised labour of the community. From father to son, from generation to generation, there has grown up a body of almost mysterious skill, which has exercised itself in making the tools for carrying on the occupation of

living; so that a very large part of the audience of the masters of the greater arts have been engaged like them in making things; only the higher men were making things wholly to satisfy men's spiritual wants; the lower, things whose first intention was to satisfy their bodily wants. But though, in theory, all these could be satisfied without any expression of the imagination, any practice of art, yet history tells us what we might well have guessed would be the case, that the thing could not stop there. Men whose hands were skilled in fashioning things could not help thinking the while, and soon found out that their deft fingers could express some part of the tangle of their thoughts, and that this new pleasure hindered not their daily work, for in the very labour that they lived by lay the material in which their thought could be embodied; and thus, though they laboured, they laboured somewhat for their pleasure and uncompelled, and had conquered the curse of toil, and were men.

Here, then, we have two kinds of art: one of them would exist even if men had no needs but such as are essentially spiritual, and only accidentally material or bodily. The other kind, called into existence by material needs, is bound no less to recognise the aspirations of the soul and receives the impress of its striving towards perfection. If the case be as I have represented it, even the lesser arts are well worthy the attention of reasonable men, and those who despise them must do so either out of ignorance as to what they really are, or because they themselves are in some way or other enemies of civilisation, either outlaws from it or corrupters of it.

As to the outlaws from civilisation, they are those of

whom I began by saying that there are or were people who rejected the arts of life on grounds that we could at least understand, if we could not sympathise with the rejecters. There have been in all ages of civilisation men who have acted, or had a tendency to act, on some such principle as the following words represent: The world is full of grievous labour, the poor toiling for the rich, and ever remaining poor; with this we, at least, will have nought to do; we cannot amend it, but we will not be enriched by it, nor be any better than the worst of our fellows. Well, this is what may be called the monk's way of rejecting the arts, whether he be Christian monk, or Buddhist ascetic, or ancient philosopher. I believe he is wrong, but I cannot call him enemy. Sometimes I can't help thinking, Who knows but what the whole world may come to that for a little? the field of art may have to lie fallow a while that the weeds may be known for what they are, and be burnt in the end. I say that I have at least respect for the dwellers in the tub of Diogenes; indeed I don't look upon it as so bad a house after all. With a plane-tree and a clear brook near it, and some chance of daily bread and onions, it will do well enough. I have seen worse houses to let for seven hundred pounds a year. But, mind you, it must be the real thing. The tub of Diogenes lined with padded drab velvet, lighted by gas, polished and cleaned by vicarious labour, and expecting every morning due visits from the milkman, the baker, the butcher, and the fishmonger, that is a cynical dwelling which I cannot praise. If we are to be excused for rejecting the arts, it must be not because we are contented to be less than men, but because we long to be more than men.

For I have said that there are some rejecters of the arts who are corrupters of civilisation. Indeed, they do not altogether reject them ; they will eat them and drink them and wear them, and use them as lackeys to eke out their grandeur, and as nets to catch money with, but nothing will they learn or care about them. They will push them to the utmost as far as the satisfying of their material needs go, they will increase the labour infinitely that produces material comfort, but they will reach no helping hand to that which makes labour tolerable ; and they themselves are but a part of the crowd that toils without an aim ; for they themselves labour with tireless energy to multiply the race of man, and then make the multitude unhappy. Therefore let us pity them, that they have been born coarse, violent, unjust, inhuman ; let us pity them, yet resist them. For these things they do unwitting indeed, but are none the less oppressors ; oppressors of the arts, and therefore of the people, who have a right to the solace which the arts alone can give to the life of simple men. Well, these men are, singly or in combination, the rich and powerful of the world ; they rule civilisation at present, and if it were not through ignorance that they err, those who see the fault and lament it would indeed have no choice but to reject all civilisation with the ascetic ; but since they are led astray unwittingly, there is belike a better way to resist their oppression than by mere renunciation. I say that if there were no other way of resisting those oppressors of the people, whom we call in modern slang Philistines, save the monk's or ascetic's way, that is the way all honest men would have to take whose eyes were opened

to the evil. But there is another way of resistance, which I shall ask your leave to call the citizen's way, who says: There is a vast deal of labour spent in supplying civilised man with things which he has come to consider needful, and which, as a rule, he will not do without. Much of that labour is grievous and oppressive; but since there is much more of grievous labour in the world than there used to be, it is clear that there is more than there need be, and more than there will be in time to come, if only men of goodwill look to it; what therefore can we do towards furthering that good time and reducing the amount of grievous labour; first, by abstaining from multiplying our material wants unnecessarily; and secondly, by doing our best to introduce the elements of hope and pleasure into all the labour with which we have anything to do?

These, I think, are the principles on which the citizen's resistance to Philistine oppression must be founded: to do with as few things as we can, and as far as we can to see to it that these things are the work of freemen and not of slaves; these two seem to me to be the main duties to be fulfilled by those who wish to live a life at once free and refined, serviceable to others, and pleasant to themselves. Now it is clear that if we are to fulfil these duties we must take active interest in the arts of life which supply men's material needs, and know something about them, so that we may be able to distinguish slaves' work from freemen's, and to decide what we may accept and what we must renounce of the wares that are offered to us as necessaries and comforts of life. It is to help you to a small fragment of this necessary

knowledge that I am standing before you with this word in my mouth, the Lesser Arts of Life. Of course it is only on a few of these that I have anything to say to you, but of those that I shall speak I believe I know something, either as a workman or a very deeply interested onlooker; wherefore I shall ask your leave to speak quite plainly, and without fear or favour.

You understand that our ground is that not only is it possible to make the matters needful to our daily life works of art, but that there is something wrong in the civilisation that does not do this: if our houses, our clothes, our household furniture and utensils are not works of art, they are either wretched makeshifts or, what is worse, degrading shams of better things. Furthermore, if any of these things make any claim to be considered works of art, they must show obvious traces of the hand of man guided directly by his brain, without more interposition of machines than is absolutely necessary to the nature of the work done. Again, whatsoever art there is in any of these articles of daily use must be evolved in a natural and unforced manner from the material that is dealt with: so that the result will be such as could not be got from any other material; if we break this law we shall make a triviality, a toy, not a work of art. Lastly, love of nature in all its forms must be the ruling spirit of such works of art as we are considering; the brain that guides the hand must be healthy and hopeful, must be keenly alive to the surroundings of our own days, and must be only so much affected by the art of past times as is natural for one who practises an art which is alive, growing, and looking toward the future.

Asking you to keep these principles in mind, I

will now, with your leave, pass briefly over the Lesser Arts with which I myself am conversant. Yet, first, I must mention an art which, though it ministers to our material needs, and therefore, according to what I have said as to the division between purely spiritual and partly material arts, should be reckoned among the Lesser Arts, has, to judge by its etymology, not been so reckoned in times past, for it has been called Architecture; nevertheless it does practically come under the condemnation of those who despise the lesser or more material arts; so please allow me to reckon it among them. Now, speaking of the whole world and at all times, it would not be quite correct to say that the other arts could not exist without it; because there both have been and are large and important races of mankind who, properly speaking, have no architecture, who are not house-dwellers, but tent-dwellers, and who, nevertheless, are by no means barren of the arts. For all that it is true that these non-architectural races (let the Chinese stand as a type of them) have no general mastery over the arts, and seem to play with them rather than to try to put their souls into them. Clumsy-handed as the European or Aryan workman is (of a good period, I mean) as compared with his Turanian fellow, there is a seriousness and meaning about his work that raises it as a piece of art far above the deftness of China and Japan; and it is this very seriousness and depth of feeling which, when brought to bear upon the matters of our daily life, is in fact the soul of architecture, whatever the body may be; so that I shall still say that among ourselves, the men of modern Europe, the existence of the other arts is bound up with that

of Architecture. Please do not forget that, whatever else I may say to-day, you must suppose me to assume that we have noble buildings which we have to adorn with our lesser arts: for this art of building is the true democratic art, the child of the man-inhabited earth, the expression of the life of man thereon. I claim for our Society no less a position than this, that in calling on you to reverence the examples of noble building, and to understand and protect the continuity of its history, it is guarding the very springs of all art, of all cultivation.

Now I would not do this noble art such disrespect as to speak of it in detail as only a part of a subject. I would not treat it so even in its narrower sense as the art of building; its wider sense I consider to mean the art of creating a building with all the appliances fit for carrying on a dignified and happy life. The arts I have to speak of in more detail are a part, and comparatively a small part, of Architecture considered in that light; but there is so much to be said even about these, when we have once made up our mind that they are worth our attention at all, that you must understand that my talk to-night will simply be hints to draw your attention to the subjects in question.

I shall try, then, to give you some hints on these arts or crafts: pottery and glass-making; weaving, with its necessary servant dyeing; the craft of printing patterns on cloth and on paper; furniture; and also, with fear and trembling, I will say a word on the art of dress. Some of these are lesser arts with a vengeance; only you see I happen to know something about them practically, and so venture to speak of them.

So let us begin with pottery, the most ancient and

universal, as it is perhaps (setting aside house-building) the most important of the lesser arts, and one, too, the consideration of which recommends itself to us from a more or less historical point of view, because, owing to the indestructibility of its surface, it is one of the few domestic arts of which any specimens are left to us of the ancient and classical times. Now all nations, however barbarous, have made pottery, sometimes of shapes obviously graceful, sometimes with a mingling of wild grotesquery amid gracefulness; but none have ever failed to make it on true principles, none have made shapes ugly or base till quite modern times. I should say that the making of ugly pottery was one of the most remarkable inventions of our civilisation. All nations with any turn for art have speedily discovered what capabilities for producing beautiful form lie in the making of an earthen pot of the commonest kind, and what opportunities it offers for the reception of swift and unlaborious, but rich ornament; and how nothing hinders that ornament from taking the form of representation of history and legend. In favour of this art the classical nations relaxed the artistic severity that insisted otherwhere on perfection of figure-drawing in architectural work; and we may partly guess what an astonishing number of capable and ready draughtsmen there must have been in the good times of Greek art from the great mass of first-rate painting on pottery, garnered from the tombs mostly, and still preserved in our museums after all these centuries of violence and neglect.

Side by side with the scientific and accomplished work of the Greeks, and begun much earlier than the earliest of it, was being practised another form of the

art in Egypt and the Euphrates valley; it was less perfect in the highest qualities of design, but was more elaborate in technique, which elaboration no doubt was forced into existence by a craving for variety and depth of colour and richness of decoration, which did not press heavily on the peoples of the classical civilisation, who, masters of form as they were, troubled themselves but little about the refinements of colour. This art has another interest for us in the fact that from it sprang all the great school of pottery which has flourished in the East, apart from the special and peculiar work of China. Though the fictile art of that country is a development of so much later date than what we have just been considering, let us make a note of it here as the third kind of potter's work, which no doubt had its origin in the exploitation of local material joined to the peculiar turn of the Chinese workman for finesse of manual skill and for boundless patience.

Northern Europe during the Middle Ages, including our own country, could no more do without a native art of pottery than any other simple peoples; but the work done by them being very rough, and serving for the commonest domestic purposes (always with the exception of certain tile-work), had not the chance of preservation which superstition gave to the Greek pottery, and very little of it is left; that little shows us that our Gothic forefathers shared the pleasure in the potter's wheel and the capabilities of clay for quaint and pleasant form and fanciful invention which has been common to most times and places, and this rough craft even lived on as a village art till almost the days of our grandfathers, turning out worthy work enough, done in a very unconscious

and simple fashion on the old and true principles of art, side by side with the whims and inanities which mere fashion had imposed on so-called educated people.

Every one of these forms of art, with many another which I have no time to speak of, was good in itself; the general principles of them may be expressed somewhat as follows. First. Your vessel must be of a convenient shape for its purpose. Second. Its shape must show to the greatest advantage the plastic and easily-worked nature of clay; the lines of its contour must flow easily; but you must be on the look-out to check the weakness and languidness that comes from striving after over-elegance. Third. All the surface must show the hand of the potter, and not be finished with a baser tool. Fourth. Smoothness and high finish of surface, though a quality not to be despised, is to be sought after as a means for gaining some special elegance of ornament, and not as an end for its own sake. Fifth. The commoner the material the rougher the ornament, but by no means the scantier; on the contrary, a pot of fine materials may be more slightly ornamented, both because all the parts of the ornamentation will be minuter, and also because it will in general be considered more carefully. Sixth. As in the making of the pot, so in its surface ornament, the hand of the workman must be always visible in it; it must glorify the necessary tools and necessary pigment: swift and decided execution is necessary to it; whatever delicacy there may be in it must be won in the teeth of the difficulties that will result from this; and because of these difficulties the delicacy will be more exquisite and delightful than in easier arts where, so to say, the execution can wait for more labori-

ous patience. These, I say, seem to me the principles that guided the potter's art in the days when it was progressive: it began to cease to be so in civilised countries somewhat late in that period of blight which was introduced by the so-called Renaissance. Excuse a word or two more of well-known history in explanation. Our own pottery of Northern Europe, made doubtless without any reference to classical models, was very rude, as I have said; it was fashioned of natural clay, glazed when necessary transparently with salt or lead, and the ornament on it was done with another light-coloured clay, sometimes coloured further with metallic oxides under the glaze. During the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries the more finished work, which had its origin, as before mentioned, in Egypt and the Euphrates valley, was introduced into Southern Europe through Moorish or rather Arab Spain, and other points of contact between Europe and the East. This ware, known now as Majolica, was of an earthen body covered with opaque white glaze, ornamented with colours formed of oxides, some of which were by a curious process reduced into a metallic state, giving thereby strange and beautiful lustrous colours. This art quickly spread through Italy, and for a short time was practised there with very great success, but was not much taken up by the nations of Northern Europe, who for the most part went on making the old lead or salt glazed earthenware; the latter, known as Grès de Cologne, still exists as a rough manufacture in the border lands of France and Germany, though I should think it is not destined to live much longer otherwise than as a galvanised modern antique.

When Italy was still turning out fine works in the

Majolica wares much of the glory of the Renaissance was yet shining; but the last flicker of that glory had died out by the time that another form of Eastern art invaded our European pottery. Doubtless the folly of the time would have found another instrument for destroying whatever of genuine art was left among our potters if it had not had the work of China ready to hand, but it came to pass that this was the instrument that finally made nonsense of the whole craft among us. True it is that a very great proportion of the Chinese work imported consisted of genuine works of art of their kind, though mostly much inferior to the work of Persia, Damascus, or Granada; but the fact is, it was not the art in it that captivated our forefathers, but its grosser and more material qualities. The whiteness of the paste, the hardness of the glaze, the neatness of the painting, and the consequent delicacy, or luxuriousness rather, of the ware, were the qualities that the eighteenth-century potters strove so hard to imitate. They were indeed valuable qualities in the hands of a Chinaman, deft as he was of execution, fertile of design, fanciful though not imaginative, in short, a born maker of pretty toys: but such daintinesses were of little avail to a good workman of our race; eager, impatient, imaginative, with something of melancholy or moroseness even in his sport, his very jokes two-edged and fierce, he had other work to do, if his employers but knew it, than the making of toys. Well, but in the time we have before us the workman was but thought of as a convenient machine, and this machine, driven by the haphazard whims of the time, produced at Meissen, at Sèvres, at Chelsea, at Derby, and in Staffordshire, a most woeful set of works of art, of which perhaps those

of Sèvres were the most repulsively hideous, those of Meissen (at their worst) the most barbarous, and those made in England the stupidest, though it may be the least ugly.

Now this is very briefly the history of the art of pottery down to our own times, when styleless anarchy prevails; a state of things not so hopeless as in the last century, because it shows a certain uneasiness as to whether we are right or wrong, which may be a sign of life. Meanwhile, as to matters of art, the craft which turns out such tons of commercial wares, every piece of which ought to be a work of art, produces almost literally nothing. On this dismal side of things I will not dwell, but will ask you to consider with me what can be done to remedy it; a question which I know exercises much many excellent and public-spirited men who are at the head of pottery works. Well, in the first place, it is clear that the initiative cannot be wholly taken by these men; we, all of us I mean who care about the arts, must help them by asking for the right thing, and making them quite clear what it is we ask for. To my mind it should be something like this, which is but another way of putting those principles of the art which I spoke of before. First. No vessel should be fashioned by being pressed into a mould that can be made by throwing on the wheel, or otherwise by hand. Second. All vessels should be finished on the wheel, not turned in a lathe, as is now the custom. How can you expect to have good workmen when they know that whatever surface their hands may put on the work will be taken off by a machine? Third. It follows, as a corollary to the last point, that we must not demand excessive neatness in pottery, and this more

especially in cheap wares. Workmanlike finish is necessary, but finish to be workmanlike must always be in proportion to the kind of work. What we get in pottery at present is mechanical finish, not workmanlike, and is as easy to do as the other is hard: one is a matter of a manager's system, the other comes of constant thought and trouble on the part of the men, who by that time are artists, as we call them. Fourth. As to the surface decoration on pottery, it is clear it must never be printed; for the rest, it would take more than an hour to go even very briefly into the matter of painting on pottery; but one rule we have for a guide, and whatever we do if we abide by it, we are quite sure to go wrong if we reject it: and it is common to all the lesser arts. Think of your material. Don't paint anything on pottery save what can be painted only on pottery, if you do, it is clear that, however good a draughtsman you may be, you do not care about that special art. You can't suppose that the Greek wall-painting was anything like their painting on pottery; there is plenty of evidence to show that it was not. Or take another example from the Persian art; it is easy for those conversant with it to tell from an outline tracing of a design whether it was done for pottery-painting or for other work. Fifth. Finally, when you have asked for these qualities from the potters, and even in a very friendly way boycotted them a little till you get them, you will of course be prepared to pay a great deal more for your pottery than you do now, even for the rough work you may have to take. I'm sure that won't hurt you; we shall only have less and break less, and our incomes will still be the same.

Now as to the kindred art of making glass vessels.

It is on much the same footing as the potter's craft. Never till our own day has an ugly or stupid glass vessel been made; and no wonder, considering the capabilities of the art. In the hands of a good workman the metal is positively alive, and is, you may say, coaxing him to make something pretty. Nothing but commercial enterprise capturing an unlucky man and setting him down in the glassmaker's chair with his pattern beside him (which I should think must generally have been originally designed by a landscape gardener); nothing but this kind of thing could turn out ugly glasses. This stupidity will never be set right till we give up demanding accurately-gauged glasses made by the gross. I am fully in earnest when I say that if I were setting about getting good glasses made, I would get some good workmen together, tell them the height and capacity of the vessels I wanted, and perhaps some general idea as to kind of shape, and then let them do their best. Then I would sort them out as they came from the annealing arches (what a pleasure that would be!) and I would put a good price on the best ones, for they would be worth it; and I don't believe that the worst would be bad.

In speaking of glass-work, it is a matter of course that I am only thinking of that which is blown and worked by hand; moulded and cut glass may have commercial, but cannot have artistic value. As to the material of the glass vessels, that is a very important point. Modern managers have worked very hard to get their glass colourless: it does not seem to me that they have quite succeeded. I should say that their glass was cold and bluish in colour; but whether or not, their aim was wrong. A slight tint is an advan-

tage in the metal; so are slight specks and streaks, for these things make the form visible. The modern managers of glassworks have taken enormous pains to get rid of all colour in their glass; to get it so that when worked into a vessel it shall not show any slightest speck or streak; in fact, they have toiled to take all character out of the metal, and have succeeded; and this in spite of the universal admiration for the Venice glass of the seventeenth century, which is both specked and streaky, and has visible colour in it. This glass of Venice or Murano is most delicate in its form, and was certainly meant quite as much for ornament as use; so you may be sure that if the makers of it had seen any necessity for getting more mechanical perfection in their metal they would have tried for it and got it; but like all true artists they were contented when they had a material that served the purpose of their special craft, and would not weary themselves in seeking after what they did not want. And I feel sure that if they had been making glass for ordinary table use at a low price, and which ran more risks of breakage, as they would have had to fashion their vessels thicker and less daintily they would have been contented with a rougher metal than that which they used. Such a manufacture yet remains to be set on foot, and I very much wish it could be done; only it must be a manufacture; must be done by hand, and not by machine, human or otherwise.

So much, and very briefly, of these two important Lesser Arts, which it must be admitted are useful, even to Diogenes, since the introduction of tea: I have myself at a pinch tried a tin mug for tea, and found it altogether inconvenient, and a horn I found worse still; so, since we must have pottery and glass, and since it is

only by an exertion of the cultivated intellect that they can be made ugly, I must needs wish that we might take a little less trouble in that direction: at the same time I quite understand that in this case both the goods would cost the consumers more, even much more, and that the capitalists who risk their money in keeping the manufactories of the goods going would make less money; both which things to my mind would be fruitful in benefits to the community.

The next craft I have to speak of is that of Weaving: not so much of an art as pottery and glass-making, because so much of it must be mechanical, engaged in the making of mere plain cloth; of which side of it all one need say is that we should have as little plain cloth made as we conveniently can, and for that reason should insist on having it made well and solidly, and of good materials; the other side of it, that which deals with figure-weaving, must be subdivided into figure-weaving which is carried out mechanically, and figure-weaving which is altogether a handicraft.

As to the first of these, its interest is limited by the fact that it is mechanical; since the manner of doing it has with some few exceptions varied little for many hundred years: such trivial alterations as the lifting the warp-threads by means of the Jacquard machine, or throwing the shuttle by steam-power, ought not to make much difference in the art of it, though I cannot say that they have not done so. On the other hand, though mechanical, it produces beautiful things, which an artist cannot disregard, and man's ingenuity and love of beauty may be made obvious enough in it; neither do I call the figure-weaver's craft a dull one, if he be set to do things which are worth doing: to watch the web

growing day by day almost magically, in anticipation of the time when it is to be taken out and one can see it on the right side in all its well-schemed beauty; to make something beautiful that will last, out of a few threads of silken wool, seems to me a not unpleasant way of earning one's livelihood so long only as one lives and works in a pleasant place, with the workday not too long, and a book or two to be got at.

However, since this is admittedly a mechanical craft, I have not much to say of it, for it is not my business this evening to speak of the designs for its fashioning; this much one may say, that as the designing of woven stuffs fell into degradation in the latter days, the designers got fidgeting after trivial novelties, change for the sake of change; they must needs strive to make their woven flowers look as if they were painted with a brush, or even sometimes as if they were drawn by the engraver's burin. This gave them plenty of trouble, and exercised their ingenuity in the tormenting of their web with spots and stripes and ribs and the rest of it, but quite destroyed the seriousness of the work, and even its *raison d'être*. As of pottery-painting, so of figure-weaving: do nothing in it but that which only weaving can do, and to this end make your design as elaborate as you please in silhouette, but carry it out simply; you are not drawing lines freely with your shuttle, you are building up a pattern with a fine rectilinear mosaic. If this is kept well in mind by the designer, and he does not try to force his material into no-thoroughfares, he may have abundant pleasure in the making of woven stuffs, and he is perhaps less likely to go wrong (if he has a feeling for colour) in this art than in any other. I will say further that he should

be careful to get due proportion between his warp and weft: not to starve the first, which is the body of the web so to say, for the sake of the second, which is its clothes; this is done nowadays over much by ingenious designers who are trying to make their web look like non-mechanical stuffs, or who want to get a delusive show of solidity in a poor cloth, which is much to be avoided. A similar fault we are too likely to fall into is of a piece with what is done in all the lesser arts to-day, and which doubtless is much fostered by the ease given to our managers of works by the over-development of machinery: I am thinking of the weaving up of rubbish into apparently delicate and dainty wares. No man with the true instinct of a workman should have anything to do with this: it may not mean commercial dishonesty, though I suspect it sometimes does, but it must mean artistic dishonesty: poor materials in this craft, as in all others, should only be used in coarse work, where they are used without pretence for what they are: this we must agree to at once, or sink all art in commerce (so called) in these crafts.

So much for mechanical figure-weaving. Its *raison d'être* is that it gives scope to the application of imagination and beauty to any cloth, thick or thin, close or open, costly or cheap. In some way or other you may weave any of these into figures; but when we may limit ourselves to certain heavy, close, and very costly cloths, we no longer need the help of anything that can fairly be called a machine: little more is needed than a frame which will support heavy beams on which we may strain our warp; our work is purely hand-work, we may do what we will according to the fineness of our warp. These are the conditions of carpet and tapestry weav-

ing, meaning by carpets the real thing, such as the East has furnished us with from time immemorial, and not the makeshift imitation woven by means of the Jacquard loom, or otherwise mechanically.

As to the art of carpet-weaving, then, one must say that historically it belongs to the East. I do not think it has been proved that any piled carpets were made in Europe during the Middle Ages proper, though some writers have thought that a fabric, called in edicts of the fourteenth century tapisserie sarracenoise, was in fact piled carpet-work: however, in the seventeenth century they certainly were being made to a certain extent even in these islands: amongst other examples I have seen some pieces of carpet-work in a Jacobean house in Oxfordshire, which an inventory of about 1620 calls, oddly enough, Irish stitch. But wherever the history of the art may begin among ourselves, I fear it may almost be said to end with the seventeenth century; there are still a few places where hand-wrought carpets are made, but scarcely anything original is done; coarsely copied imitations of the Levantine carpets, and a sort of deduction from the degraded follies of the time of Louis the Fifteenth, traditionally thought to be suitable for the dreary waste of an aristocratic country-house, are nearly all that is turned out at present. Still I do not agree with an opinion which I have heard expressed, that carpets can only be made in the East: such carpets as have been made there for the last hundred years or so, which are chiefly pieces of nearly formless colour, could not be made satisfactorily and spontaneously by Western art; but these carpets, delightful as they are, are themselves the product of a failing art: their prototypes are partly those simple but scientifically designed cloths

whose patterns are founded on the elaborate pavement mosaics of Byzantine art; and partly they are degradations, traceable by close study, from the elaborate floral art of Persia. The originals of the first kind may be seen accurately figured in many of the pictures of the palmy days of Italian and Flemish art, and, as I have said, they are designed on scientific principles which any good designer can apply to works of our own day without burdening his conscience with the charge of plagiarism. As to the other kind of the Persian floral designs, there are still a few of these in existence, though, as I have never seen any of them figured in old pictures, I doubt if they found their way to Europe much in the Middle Ages. These, beautiful as they are in colour, are as far as possible from lacking form in design; they are fertile of imagination, and lovely in drawing; and though imitation of them would carry with it its usual disastrous consequences, they show us the way to set about designing such-like things, and that a carpet can be made which by no means depends for its success on the mere instinct for colour, which is the last gift of art to leave certain races. Withal, one thing seems certain, that if we don't set to work making our own carpets it will not be long before we shall find the East fail us: for that last gift, the gift of the sense of harmonious colour, is speedily dying out in the East before the conquests of European rifles and money-bags.

As to the other manufacture of unmechanically woven cloth, the art of tapestry-weaving, it was, while it flourished, not only an art of Europe, but even of Northern Europe. Still more than carpet-weaving, it must be spoken of in the past tense. If you are curious on the subject of its technique you may see that going

on as in its earlier, or let us say real, life at the Gobelins at Paris; but it is a melancholy sight: the workmen are as handy at it as only Frenchmen can be at such work, and their skill is traditional too, I have heard; for they are the sons, grandsons, and great-grandsons of tapestry-weavers. Well, their ingenuity is put to the greatest pains for the least results: it would be a mild word to say that what they make is worthless; it is more than that; it has a corrupting and deadening influence upon all the Lesser Arts of France, since it is always put forward as the very standard and crown of all that those arts can do at the best: a more idiotic waste of human labour and skill it is impossible to conceive. There is another branch of the same stupidity, differing slightly in technique, at Beauvais; and the little town of Aubusson in mid-France has a decaying commercial industry of the like rubbish. I am sorry to have to say that an attempt to set the art going which has been made, doubtless with the best intentions, under royal patronage at Windsor, within the last few years, has most unluckily gone on the lines of the work at the Gobelins, and, if it does not change its system utterly, is doomed to artistic failure, whatever its commercial success may be.

Well, this is all I have to say about the poor remains of the art of tapestry-weaving: and yet what a noble art it was once! To turn our chamber walls into the green woods of the leafy month of June, populous of bird and beast; or a summer garden with man and maid playing round the fountain, or a solemn procession of the mythical warriors and heroes of old; that surely was worth the trouble of doing, and the money that had to be paid for it: that was no languid acquiescence in an upholsterer's fashion. How well I remem-

ber as a boy my first acquaintance with a room hung with faded greenery at Queen Elizabeth's Lodge, by Chingford Hatch, in Epping Forest (I wonder what has become of it now), and the impression of romance that it made upon me; a feeling that always comes back on me when I read, as I often do, Sir Walter Scott's Antiquary, and come to the description of the green room at Monkbarns, amongst which the novelist has with such exquisite cunning of art imbedded the fresh and glittering verses of the summer poet Chaucer; yes, that was more than upholstery, believe me.

Nor must you forget that when the art was at its best, while on the one side it was almost a domestic art, and all sorts of naïve fancies were embodied in it, it took the place in Northern Europe of the fresco painting of Italy; among the existing easel pictures of the Flemish school of the fifteenth century there are no designs which are equal in conception and breadth of treatment to those which were worked out in tapestry, and I believe that some of the very best Northern artists spent the greater part of their time in designing for this art. Roger van der Weyden of the Cologne school is named as having done much in this way: under the gallery of the great hall at Hampton Court hangs a piece which I suppose is by him, and which at any rate is, taking it altogether, the finest piece I have seen. There is quite a school of tapestry in the place, by the way; the withdrawing room or solar at the end of the hall is hung with tapestries but little inferior to the first mentioned, and perhaps a little later, but unluckily, unlike it, much obscured by the dirt of centuries (they are not faded, only dirty), while the main walls of the great hall itself are hung with work

of a later date, say about 1580. You may test your taste by comparing these later works (very fine of their kind) with the earlier, and seeing which you like best. I will not try to influence you on this matter, but will only say that the borders of this later tapestry are admirably skilful pieces of execution.

Perhaps you will think I have said too much about an art that has practically perished; but as there is nothing whatever to prevent us from reviving it if we please, since the technique of it is easy to the last degree, so also it seems to me that in the better days of art the exaltation of certain parts of a craft into the region of the higher arts was both a necessary consequence of the excellence of the craft as a whole, and in return kept up that excellence to its due pitch by example. The magnificent woven pictures of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries were the natural result of the pleasure and skill that were exercised in the art of weaving in every village and homestead, at the same time that they were an encouragement to the humbler brother of the craft to persevere in doing his best.

I have now to speak of a craft which I daresay some of you will think a lesser art indeed, but which nevertheless we cannot help considering if we are to trouble ourselves at all about the art of weaving. This is the dyer's craft: of which I must say that no craft has been so oppressed by the philistinism of false commerce, or by the ignorance of the public as to their real wants; which oppression is of very late date, and belongs almost wholly to our own days. I should very much like to be able to tell you the whole story of this ancient craft, but time fails me to give you more than the very barest outline of it. The ancient Egyptians knew well the

niceties of the art. I myself have dyed wool red by the selfsame process that the Mosaic dyers used; and from the remotest times the whole art was thoroughly understood in India. If to-day I want for my own use some of the red dye above alluded to, I must send to Argolis or Acarnania for it; and Pliny would have been quite at home in the dye-house of Tintoretto's father or master. No change at all befell the art either in the East or the North till after the discovery of America; this gave the dyers one new material in itself good, and one that was doubtful or bad. The good one was the new insect dye, cochineal, which at first was used only for dyeing crimson or bluish red, and for this use cast into the shade the older red insect dye above alluded to, called by the classical peoples coccus, and by the Arabs Al-kermes. The bad new material was log-wood, so fugitive a dye as to be quite worthless as a colour by itself (as it was at first used), and to my mind of very little use otherwise. No other new dye-stuff of importance was found in America, although the discoverers came across such abundance of red-dyeing wood growing there that a huge country of South America has thence taken its name of Brazil. The next change happened about 1630, when a German discovered accidentally how to die scarlet with cochineal on a tin basis, thereby putting the old dye, kermes, almost wholly out of commerce. Next, in the last years of the eighteenth century, a worthless blue was invented (which I don't name to avoid confusion in this brief sketch). About the same time a rather valuable yellow dye (quercitron bark) was introduced from America. Next, in 1810, chemical science, which by this time had got fairly on its legs, began to busy itself about the dyer's craft, and discovered how to dye

with Prussian blue, a colour which, as a pigment, had been discovered about eighty years before. This discovery was rather harmful than otherwise to my mind, but was certainly an important one, since before that time there was but one dyeing drug that could give a blue colour capable of standing even a week of diffused daylight, indigo to wit, whether it was produced from tropical or sub-tropical plants, or from our Northern plant, woad.

Now these novelties, the sum of which amounts to very little, are all that make any difference between the practice of dyeing under Rameses the Great and under Queen Victoria, till about twenty years ago; about that time a series of the most wonderful discoveries were made by the chemists; discoveries which did the utmost credit to their skill, patience, and capacity for scientific research, and which, from a so-called commercial point of view, have been of the greatest importance; for they have, as the phrase goes, revolutionised the art of dyeing. The dye-stuffs discovered by the indefatigable genius of scientific chemists, which every one has heard of under the name of aniline colours, and which are the product of coal-tar, are brighter and stronger in colour than the old dyes, cheaper (much cheaper) in price, and, which is of course of the last importance to the dyer, infinitely easier to use. No wonder, therefore, that they have almost altogether supplanted the older dyes, except in a few cases: surely the invention seems a splendid one!

Well, it is only marred by one fact, that being an invention for the benefit of an art whose very existence depends upon its producing beauty, it is on the road, and far advanced on it, towards destroying all beauty

in the art. The fact is, that every one of these colours is hideous in itself, whereas all the old dyes are in themselves beautiful colours; only extreme perversity could make an ugly colour out of them. Under these circumstances it must, I suppose, be considered a negative virtue in the new dyes that they are as fugitive as the older ones are stable; but even on that head I will ask you to note one thing that condemns them finally, that whereas the old dyes when fading, as all colours will do more or less, simply gradually changed into paler tints of the same colour, and were not unpleasant to look on, the fading of the new dyes is a change into all kinds of abominable and livid hues. I mention this because otherwise it might be thought that a man with an artistic eye for colour might so blend the hideous but bright aniline colours as to produce at least something tolerable; indeed, this is not unfrequently attempted to-day, but with small success, partly from the reason above mentioned, partly because the hues so produced by "messing about," as I should call it, have none of the quality or character which the simpler drug gives naturally: all artists will understand what I mean by this. In short, this is what it comes to, that it would be better for us, if we cannot revive the now almost lost art of dyeing, to content ourselves with weaving our cloths of the natural colour of the fibre, or to buy them coloured by less civilised people than ourselves.

Now, really, even if you think the art of dyeing as contemptible as Pliny did, you must admit that this is a curious state of things, and worth while considering, even by a philosopher. It is most true that the chemists of our day have made discoveries almost past belief for their wonder; they have given us a set of colours which

has made a new thing of the dyer's craft; commercial enterprise has eagerly seized on the gift, and yet, unless all art is to disappear from our woven stuffs, we must turn round and utterly and simply reject it. We must relegate these new dyes to a museum of scientific curiosities, and for our practice go back, if not to the days of the Pharaohs, yet at least to those of Tintoret. I say I invite you to consider this, because it is a type of the oppression under which the lesser arts are suffering at the present day.

The art of dyeing leads me naturally to the humble but useful art of printing on cloth: really a very ancient art, since it is not essential to it that the pattern should be printed; it may be painted by hand. Now, the painting of cloth with real dyes was practised from the very earliest days in India; and, since the Egyptians of Pliny's time knew the art well, it is most probable that in that little-changing land it was very old also. Indeed many of the minute and elaborate patterns on the dresses of Egyptian imagery impress me strongly as representing what would naturally be the work of dye-painted linen. As to the craft among ourselves, it has, as a matter of course, suffered grievously from the degradation of dyeing, and this not only from the worsening of the tints both in beauty and durability, but from a more intricate cause. I have said that the older dyes were much more difficult to use than the modern ones. The processes for getting a many-coloured pattern on to a piece of cotton, even so short a while back as when I was a boy, were many and difficult. As a rule, this is done in fewer hours now than it was in days then. You may think this a desirable change, but, except on the score of cheapness, I can't agree with you. The

natural and healthy difficulties of the old processes, all connected as they were with the endeavour to make the colour stable, drove any designer who had anything in him to making his pattern peculiarly suitable to the whole art, and gave a character to it, that character which you so easily recognise in Indian palampores, or in the faded curtains of our grandmothers' time, which still, in spite of many a summer's sun and many and many a strenuous washing, retain at least their reds and blues. In spite of the rudeness or the extravagance of these things, we are always attracted towards them, and the chief reason is, that we feel at once that there is something about the designs natural to the craft, that they can be done only by the practice of it, a quality which, I must once more repeat, is a necessity for all the designs of the lesser arts. But in the comparatively easy way in which these cloths are printed to-day, there are no special difficulties to stimulate the designer to invention; he can get any design done on his cloth; the printer will make no objections, so long as the pattern is the right size for his roller, and has only the due number of colours. The result of all this is ornament on the cotton, which might just as well have been printed or drawn on paper, and in spite of any grace or cleverness in the design, it is found to look poor and tame and wiry. That you will see clearly enough when some one has had a fancy to imitate some of the generous and fertile patterns that were once specially designed for the older cloths. It all comes to nothing; it is dull, hard, unsympathetic. No; there is nothing for it but the trouble and the simplicity of the earlier craft, if you are to have any beauty in cloth-printing at all. And if not, why should we trouble to have a

pattern of any sort on our cotton cloths? I for one am dead against it, unless the pattern is really beautiful; it is so very worthless if it is not.

As I have been speaking about printing on cotton cloths, I suppose I am bound to say something also on the quite modern and very humble, but, as things go, useful art of printing patterns on paper for wall-hangings. But really there is not much to be said about it, unless we were considering the arrangement and formation of its patterns; because it is so very free from those difficulties the meeting and conquering of which give character to the more intricate crafts. I think the real way to deal successfully with designing for paper-hangings is to accept their mechanical nature frankly, to avoid falling into the trap of trying to make your paper look as if it were painted by hand. Here is the place, if anywhere, for dots and lines and hatchings: mechanical enrichment is of the first necessity in it. After that you may be as intricate and elaborate in your pattern as you please; nay, the more and the more mysteriously you interweave your sprays and stems the better for your purpose, as the whole thing has to be pasted flat on a wall, and the cost of all this intricacy will but come out of your own brain and hand. For the rest, the fact that in this art we are so little helped by beautiful and varying material imposes on us the necessity for being specially thoughtful in our designs; every one of them must have a distinct idea in it; some beautiful piece of nature must have pressed itself on our notice so forcibly that we are quite full of it, and can, by submitting ourselves to the rules of art, express our pleasure to others, and give them some of the keen delight that we ourselves have felt. If we cannot

do this in some measure our paper design will not be worth much; it will be but a makeshift expedient for covering a wall with something or other; and if we really care about art we shall not put up with something or other, but shall choose honest whitewash instead, on which sun and shadow play so pleasantly, if only our room be well planned and well shaped, and look kindly on us. A great If, indeed; which lands me at once into my next division of the lesser arts, which for want of a better word I will call house-furnishing: I say it lands me there, because if only our houses were built as they should be, we should want such a little furniture, and be so happy in that scantiness. Even as it is, we should at all events take as our maxim the less the better: excess of furniture destroys the repose of a lazy man, and is in the way of an industrious one; and besides, if we really care for art we shall always feel inclined to save on superfluities, that we may have a wherewithal to spend on works of art.

Simplicity is the one thing needful in furnishing, of that I am certain; I mean first as to quantity, and secondly as to kind and manner of design. The arrangement of our houses ought surely to express the kind of life we lead, or desire to lead; and to my mind, if there is anything to be said in favour of that to-day somewhat well-abused English middle class, it is that, amidst all the narrowness that is more or less justly charged against it, it has a kind of orderly intelligence which is not without some value. Such as it is, such its houses ought to be if it takes any pains about them, as I think it should: they should look like part of the life of decent citizens prepared to give good commonplace reasons for what they do. For us to set to work to

imitate the minor vices of the Borgias, or the degraded and nightmare whims of the *blasé* and bankrupt French aristocracy of Louis the Fifteenth's time, seems to me merely ridiculous. So I say our furniture should be good citizen's furniture, solid and well made in workmanship, and in design should have nothing about it that is not easily defensible, no monstrosities or extravagances, not even of beauty, lest we weary of it. As to matters of construction, it should not have to depend on the special skill of a very picked workman, or the super-excellence of his glue, but be made on the proper principles of the art of joinery: also I think that, except for very movable things like chairs, it should not be so very light as to be nearly imponderable; it should be made of timber rather than walking-sticks. Moreover, I must needs think of furniture as of two kinds: one part of it being chairs, dining and working tables, and the like, the necessary work-a-day furniture in short, which should be of course both well made and well proportioned, but simple to the last degree; nay, if it were rough I should like it the better, not the worse; with work-a-day furniture like this we should among other blessings avoid the terror which now too often goes with the tolerably regularly recurring accidents of the week.

But besides this kind of furniture, there is the other kind of what I should call state-furniture, which I think is proper even for a citizen; I mean sideboards, cabinets, and the like, which we have quite as much for beauty's sake as for use; we need not spare ornament on these, but may make them as elegant and elaborate as we can with carving, inlaying, or painting; these are the blossoms of the art of furniture, as picture tapestry is of

the art of weaving: but these also should not be scattered about the house at haphazard, but should be used architecturally to dignify important chambers and important places in them. And once more, whatever you have in your rooms think first of the walls, for they are that which makes your house and home; and if you don't make some sacrifice in their favour, you will find your chambers have a kind of makeshift, lodging-house look about them, however rich and handsome your movables may be.

The last of the Lesser Arts I have to speak of I come to with some trepidation; but it is so important to one half of the race of civilised mankind, the male half, that I will venture. Indeed I speak of the art of dress with the more terror because civilisation has settled for us males that art shall have no place in our clothes, and that we must in this matter occupy the unamiable position of critics of our betters. Rebel as I am, I bow to that decision, though I find it difficult to admit that a chimney-pot hat or a tail-coat is the embodiment of wisdom in clothes-philosophy; and sometimes in my more sceptical moments I puzzle myself in thinking why, when I am indoors, I should wear two coats, one with a back and no front, and the other with a front and no back. However, I have not near enough courage even to suggest a rebellion against these stern sartorial laws; and after all one can slip into and out of the queer things with great ease, and that being the case, it is far more important to me what other people wear than what I wear: so that I ask leave to be an irresponsible critic for a few moments,

Now I have lived through at least two periods of feminine dress, without counting the present one, which I perceive with some terror is trembling on the verge

of change: yes, with terror, because for a good many years past, in spite of a few extravagances, the dress of ladies in England has been highly satisfactory, and very consolatory for the mishaps that have befallen the lesser arts otherwise. Under these circumstances, both for the sake of the hope and the warning that may lie in it, I will venture to call to your memory what has befallen the art of dress in modern times.

The days of Louis the Fifteenth draw across our path a kind of enchanted wood of abominations into which we need not venture: out of those horrors costume escaped into a style that was really graceful and simple in the years that came just before the French Revolution. What this costume really was you can see as clearly as anywhere in the engravings designed by the quaint and fertile book illustrator, the Pole Chodowiecki, whose works were much imitated by our Stothard. Then came a period when dress was influenced by the affectation of imitating the art and manners of the classical times, which produced under the First Napoleon a costume characterised by somewhat of an exaggeration of slim gracefulness amongst other extravagances; for which affectations a dire revenge was lying in wait, the result of which, after a doubtful time between the dates of the Battle of Waterloo and the accession of Queen Victoria, was a style which one may call that of grim modern respectability: into the middle of that period I was born, and well I remember its horrors. If you can get at an *Illustrated London News* of about the time of the Queen's visit to Louis Philippe, look at the costumes in it; they will give you cause for serious reflection: or for an earlier example (I think) take up your "Oliver Twist," with George Cruikshank's illustra-

tions, and contemplate the effigy there figured of that insipid person Miss Rose Maylie.[1]

Well, that was the first period I have seen; on this period gradually crept another, which, at its height at least, could not be accused of over-much love of respectability: this period was that of crinoline. The woodcuts of John Leech give you admirable illustrations of all the stages of this period. It conquered something from its predecessor in that on the whole it allowed women to arrange their hair naturally and gracefully; but in everything else mere blatant vulgarity was apparently what it aimed at. I have good hopes that one may say that the degradation of costume reached its lowest depth in this costume of the Second Empire.[2] This is the second period of costume that I have seen, and its end brings us to the beginning of things as they are; when woman's dress is or may be on the whole graceful and sensible (please note that I say it may be); for the most hopeful sign of the present period is its freedom: in the two previous periods there was no freedom. In that of grim respectability a lady was positively under well-understood penalties not allowed to dress gracefully, she could not do it; under the reign of crinoline, if she had dressed simply and beautifully, like a lady, in short, she would have been hooted in the streets; but nowadays, and for years past, a lady may dress quite simply and beautifully, and yet not be noticed as having anything peculiar or theatrical in her costume. Extra-

[1] I do not mean any disrespect to Dickens, of whom I am a humble worshipper.

[2] Indeed I hope so; but, since this Lecture was delivered, unhappy tokens are multiplying that fine ladies are determined to try whether ugliness may not be more attractive than beauty.

vagances of fashion have not been lacking to us, but no one has been compelled to adopt them; every one might dress herself in the way which her own good sense told her suited her best. Now this, ladies, is the first and greatest necessity of rational and beautiful costume, that you should keep your liberty of choice; so I beg you to battle stoutly for it, or we shall all tumble into exploded follies again. Then next, your only chance of keeping that liberty is, to resist the imposition on costume of unnatural monstrosities. Garments should veil the human form, and neither caricature it, nor obliterate its lines: the body should be draped, and neither sewn up in a sack, nor stuck in the middle of a box: drapery, properly managed, is not a dead thing, but a living one, expressive of the endless beauty of motion; and if this be lost, half the pleasure of the eyes in common life is lost. You must specially bear this in mind, because the fashionable milliner has chiefly one end in view, how to hide and degrade the human body in the most expensive manner. She or he would see no beauty in the Venus of Milo; she or he looks upon you as scaffolds on which to hang a bundle of cheap rags, which can be sold dear under the name of a dress. Now, ladies, if you do not resist this to the bitter end, costume is ruined again, and all we males are rendered inexpressibly unhappy. So I beg of you fervently, do not allow yourselves to be upholstered like armchairs, but drape yourselves like women. Lastly, and this is really part of the same counsel, resist change for the sake of change; this is the very bane of all the arts. I say resist this stupidity, and the care of dress, duly subordinated to other duties, is a serious duty to you; but if you do not resist it, the care of dress becomes a frivolous waste of time. It

follows, from the admission of this advice, that you should insist on having materials for your dresses that are excellent of their kind, and beautiful of their kind, and that when you have a dress of even moderately costly materials you won't be in a hurry to see the end of it. This is a thing too which will help us weavers, body and soul, and in a due and natural way: not like the too good-natured way of my Lady Bective, who wants you to wear stiff alpaca, so that the Bradford capitalists may not have to change their machinery. I can't agree to that; if they will weave ugly cloth let them take the consequences.

But one good thing breeds another; and most assuredly a steadiness in fashion, when a good fashion has been attained, and a love of beautiful things for their own sakes and not because they are novelties, is both human, reasonable, and civilised, and will help the maker of wares, both master and man, and give them also time to think of beautiful things, and thus to raise their lives to a higher level.

Thus I have named a certain number of the lesser arts, which I must ask you to take as representing the whole mass of them. Now all these arts, since they at all events make a show of life, one may suppose civilisation considers desirable, if not necessary; but if they are to go on existing and to occupy in one way or other the lives of millions of men, it seems to me that their life should be real, that the necessity for them should be felt by those that allow them to be carried on; for surely wasted labour is a heavy burden for the world to bear.

I have said that, on the other hand, I am ready to accept the conclusion that these arts are vain and should

not be carried on at all; that we should do nothing that we can help doing beyond what is barely necessary to keep ourselves alive, that we may contemplate the mystery of life, and be ready to accept the mystery of death. Yes, that might be agreed to, if the world would; but, you see, it will not: man's life is too complex, too unmanageable at the hands of any unit of the race for such a conclusion to be come to except by a very few, better, or it may be worse than their fellows; and even they will be driven to it by noting the contrast between their aspirations and the busy and inconsistent lives of other men. I mean, if most men lived reasonably, and with justice to their fellows, no men would be drawn towards asceticism. No, the lesser arts of life must be practised, that is clear. It only remains therefore for us to determine whether they shall but minister to our material needs, receiving no help and no stimulus from the cravings of our souls, or whether they shall really form part of our lives material and spiritual, and be so helpful and natural, that even the sternest philosopher may look upon them kindly and feel helped by them.

Is it possible that civilisation can determine to brutalise the crafts of life by cutting them off from the intellectual part of us? Surely not in the long run; and yet I know that the progress of the race from barbarism to civilisation has hitherto had a tendency to make our lives more and more complex; to make us more dependent one upon the other, and to destroy individuality, which is the breath of life to art. But swiftly and without check as this tendency has grown, I know I cannot be alone in doubting if it has been an unmixed good to us, or in believing that a change will come, perhaps after some great disaster has chilled us

into pausing, and so given us time for reflection: anyhow, in some way or other, I believe the day is not so far distant when the best of men will set to work trying to simplify life on a new basis; when the organisation of labour will mean something else than the struggle of the strong to use each one to his best advantage the necessities and miseries of the weak.

Meanwhile I believe that it will speed the coming of that day if we do but look at art open-eyed and with all sincerity; I want an end of believing that we believe in art-bogies; I want the democracy of the arts established: I want every one to think for himself about them, and not to take things for granted from hearsay; every man to do what he thinks right, not in anarchical fashion, but feeling that he is responsible to his fellows for what he feels, thinks, and has determined. In these lesser arts every one should say: I have such or such an ornamental matter, not because I am told to like it, but because I like it myself, and I will have nothing that I don't like, nothing; and I can give you my reasons for rejecting this, and accepting that, and am ready to abide by them, and to take the consequences of my being right or wrong. Of course such independence must spring from knowledge, not from ignorance, and you may be sure that this kind of independence would be far from destroying the respect due to the higher intellects that busy themselves with the arts. On the contrary, it would make that respect the stronger, since those who had themselves got to think seriously about the arts would understand the better what difficulties beset the greatest men in their struggles to express what is in them. Anyhow, if this intelligent, sympathetic, and serious independence of thought about the arts does not become

general among cultivated men (and all men ought to be cultivated), it is a matter of course that the practice of the arts must fall into the hands of a degraded and despised class, degraded and despised at least as far as its daily work goes; that is to say, the greater part of its waking hours.

Surely this is a serious danger to our political and social advancement, to our cultivation, to our civilisation, in short; surely we can none of us be content to accept the responsibility of creating such a class of pariahs, or to sit quiet under the burden of its existence, if it exist at present, as indeed it does. Therefore I ask you to apply the remedy of refusing to be ignorant and nose-led about the arts; I ask you to learn what you want and to ask for it; in which case you will both get it and will breed intelligent and worthy citizens for the common weal; defenders of society, friends for yourselves.

Is not this worth doing? It will add to the troubles of life? Maybe; I will not say nay. Yet consider after all that the life of a man is more troublous than that of a swine, and the life of a freeman than the life of a slave; and take your choice accordingly. Moreover, if I am right in these matters, your trouble will be shifted, not increased: we shall take pains indeed concerning things which we care about, hard and bitter pains, maybe, yet with an end in view; but the confused, aimless, and for ever unrewarded pains which we now so plentifully take about things we do not care about, we shall sweep all that away, and so shall win calmer rest and more strenuous, less entangled work.

What other blessings are there in life save these two, fearless rest and hopeful work? Troublous as life is, it has surely given to each one of us here some times and

seasons when, surrounded by simple and beautiful things, we have really felt at rest; when the earth and all its plenteous growth, and the tokens of the varied life of men, and the very sky and waste of air above us, have seemed all to conspire together to make us calm and happy, not slothful but restful. Still oftener belike it has given us those other times, when at last, after many a struggle with incongruous hindrances, our own chosen work has lain before us disentangled from all encumbrances and unrealities, and we have felt that nothing could withhold us, not even ourselves, from doing the work we were born to do, and that we were men and worthy of life. Such rest, and such work, I earnestly wish for myself and for you, and for all men: to have space and freedom to gain such rest and such work is the end of politics; to learn how best to gain it is the end of education; to learn its inmost meaning is the end of religion.

III

ART, WEALTH, AND RICHES

AN ADDRESS DELIVERED AT A JOINT CONVERSAZIONE OF MANCHESTER SOCIETIES AT THE ROYAL INSTITUTION, MANCHESTER, 6TH MARCH 1883

ART, Wealth, and Riches are the words I have written at the head of this paper. Some of you may think that the two latter words, wealth and riches, are tautologous; but I cannot admit it. In truth there are no real synonyms in any language, I mean unless in the case of words borrowed from another tongue; and in the early days of our own language no one would have thought of using the word rich as a synonym for wealthy. He would have understood a wealthy man to mean one who had plentiful livelihood, and a rich man one who had great dominion over his fellow-men. Alexander the Rich, Canute the Rich, Alfred the Rich; these are familiar words enough in the early literature of the North; the adjective would scarcely be used except of a great king or chief, a man pre-eminent above other kings and chiefs. Now, without being a stickler for etymological accuracy, I must say that I think there are cases where modern languages have lost power by confusing two words into one meaning, and that this is one of them. I shall ask your leave therefore to use the words wealth

and riches somewhat in the way in which our forefathers did, and to understand wealth as signifying the means of living a decent life, and riches the means for exercising dominion over other people. Thus understood the words are widely different to my mind; yet, indeed, if you say that the difference is but one of degree I must needs admit it; just so it is between the shepherd's dog and the wolf. Their respective views on the subject of mutton differ only in degree.

Anyhow, I think the following question is an important one: Which shall art belong to, wealth or riches? Whose servant shall she be? or rather, Shall she be the slave of riches, or the friend and helpmate of wealth? Indeed, if I put the question in another form, and ask: Is art to be limited to a narrow class who only care for it in a very languid way, or is it to be the solace and pleasure of the whole people? the question finally comes to this: Are we to have art or the pretence of art? It is like enough that to many or even most of you the question will seem of no practical importance. To most people the present condition of art does seem in the main to be the only condition it could exist in among cultivated people, and they are (in a languid way, as I said) content with its present aims and tendencies. For myself, I am so discontented with the present conditions of art, and the matter seems to me so serious, that I am forced to try to make other people share my discontent, and am this evening risking the committal of a breach of good manners by standing before you, grievance in hand, on an occasion like this, when everybody present, I feel sure, is full of goodwill both towards the arts and towards the public. My only excuse is my belief in the sincerity of your wish to know any serious views that

can be taken of a matter so important. So I will say that the question I have asked, whether art is to be the helpmate of wealth or the slave of riches, is of great practical import, if indeed art is important to the human race, which I suppose no one here will gainsay.

Now I will ask those who think art is in a normal and healthy condition to explain the meaning of the enthusiasm (which I am glad to learn the people of Manchester share) shown of late years for the foundation and extension of museums, a great part of whose contents is but fragments of the household goods of past ages. Why do cultivated, sober, reasonable people, not lacking in a due sense of the value of money, give large sums for scraps of figured cloth, pieces of roughly made pottery, worm-eaten carving, or battered metal-work, and treasure them up in expensive public buildings under the official guardianship of learned experts? Well, we all know that these things are supposed to teach us something; they are educational. The type of all our museums, that at South Kensington, is distinctly an educational establishment. Nor is what they are supposed to teach us mere dead history; these things are studied carefully and laboriously by men who intend making their living by the art of design. Ask any expert of any school of opinion as to art what he thinks of the desirability of those who are to make designs for the ornamental part of industrial art studying from these remains of past ages, and he will be certain to answer you that such study is indispensable to a designer. So you see this is what it comes to. It is not to the best works of our own time that a student is sent; no master or expert could honestly tell him that that would do him good, but to the mere wreckage of

a bygone art, things which, when they were new, could be bought for the most part in every shop and market-place. Well, need one ask what sort of a figure the wreckage of our ornamental art would cut in a museum of the twenty-fourth century? The plain truth is that people who have studied these matters know that these remnants of the past give tokens of an art which fashioned goods not only better than we do now, but different in kind, and better because they are different in kind, and were made in quite other ways than we make such things.

Before we ask why they were so much better, and why they differ in kind and not merely in degree of goodness, I want you to note specially once more that they were common wares, bought and sold in any market. I want you to note that, in spite of the tyranny and violence of the days when they were fashioned, the beauty of which they formed a part surrounded all life; that then, at all events, art was the helpmate of wealth and not the slave of riches. True it is that then as now rich men spent great sums of money in ornament of all kinds, and no doubt the lower classes were wretchedly poor (as they are now); nevertheless, the art that rich men got differed only in abundance and splendour of material from what other people could compass. The thing to remember is that then everything which was made by man's hand was more or less beautiful.

Contrast that with the state of art at present, and then say if my unmannerly discontent is not somewhat justified. So far from everything that is made by man being beautiful, almost all ordinary wares that are made by civilised man are shabbily and pretentiously ugly; made so (it would almost seem) by perverse intent rather than by accident, when we consider how pleasant and

tempting to the inventive mind and the skilful hand are many of the processes of manufacture. Take for example the familiar art of glass-making. I have been in a glass-house, and seen the workmen in the process of their work bring the molten glass into the most elegant and delicious forms. There were points of the manufacture when, if the vessel they were making had been taken straight to the annealing house, the result would have been something which would have rivalled the choicest pieces of Venetian glass; but that could not be, they had to take their callipers and moulds and reduce the fantastic elegance of the living metal to the due marketable ugliness and vulgarity of some shape, designed most likely by a man who did not in the least know or care how glass was made; and the experience is common enough in other arts. I repeat that all manufactured goods are now divided into two classes; one class vulgar and ugly, though often pretentious enough, with work on it which it is a mockery to call ornamental, but which probably has some wretched remains of tradition still clinging to it; that is for poor people, for the uncultivated. The other class, made for some of the rich, intends to be beautiful, is carefully and elaborately designed, but usually fails of its intent partly because it is cast loose from tradition, partly because there is no co-operation in it between the designer and the handicraftsman. Thus is our wealth injured, our wealth, the means of living a decent life, and no one is the gainer; for while on the one hand the lower classes have no real art of any kind about their houses, and have instead to put up with shabby and ghastly pretences of it which quite destroy their capacity for appreciating real art when they come across it in

museums and picture-galleries, so on the other hand, not all the superfluous money of the rich can buy what they profess to want; the only real art they can have is that which is made by unassisted individual genius, the laborious and painful work of men of rare attainments and special culture, who, cumbered as they are by unromantic life and hideous surroundings, do in spite of all manage now and then to break through the hindrances and produce noble works of art, which only a very few people even pretend to understand or be moved by. This art rich people can buy and possess sometimes, but necessarily there is little enough of it; and if there were tenfold what there is, I repeat it would not move the people one jot, for they are deadened to all art by the hideousness and squalor that surround them. Nor can I honestly say that the lack is wholly on their side, for the great artists I have been speaking of are what they are in virtue of their being men of very peculiar and especial gifts, and are mostly steeped in thoughts of history, wrapped up in contemplation of the beauty of past times. If they were not so constituted, I say, they would not in the teeth of all the difficulties in their way be able to produce beauty at all. But note the result. Everyday life rejects and neglects them; they cannot choose but let it go its way, and wrap themselves up in dreams of Greece and Italy. The days of Pericles and the days of Dante are the days through which they move, and the England of our own day with its millions of eager struggling people neither helps nor is helped by them: yet it may be they bide their time of usefulness, and in days to come will not be forgotten. Let us hope so.

That, I say, is the condition of art amongst us.

Lest you doubt it, or think I exaggerate, let me ask you to note how it fares with that art which is above all others co-operative: the art of architecture, to wit. Now, none know better than I do what a vast amount of talent and knowledge there is amongst the first-rate designers of buildings nowadays; and here and there all about the country one sees the buildings they have planned, and is rejoiced by them. Yet little enough does that help us in these days when, if a man leaves England for a few years, he finds when he comes back half a county of bricks and mortar added to London. Can the greatest optimists say that the style of building in that half county has improved meanwhile? Is it not true, on the contrary, that it goes on getting worse, if that be possible? the last house built being always the vulgarest and ugliest, till one is beginning now to think with regret of the days of Gower Street, and to look with some complacency on the queer little boxes of brown brick which stand with their trim gardens choked up amongst new squares and terraces in the suburbs of London? It is a matter of course that almost every new house shall be quite disgracefully and degradingly ugly, and if by chance we come across a new house that shows any signs of thoughtfulness in design and planning we are quite astonished, and want to know who built it, who owns it, who designed it, and all about it from beginning to end; whereas when architecture was alive every house built was more or less beautiful. The phrase which called the styles of the Middle Ages Ecclesiastical Architecture has been long set aside by increased knowledge, and we know now that in that time cottage and cathedral were built in the same style and had the same kind of ornaments about them; size and, in some cases,

material were the only differences between the humble and the majestic building. And it will not be till this sort of beauty is beginning to be once more in our towns, that there will be a real school of architecture; till every little chandler's shop in our suburbs, every shed run up for mere convenience is made without effort fit for its purpose and beautiful at one and the same time. Now just think what a contrast that makes with our present way of housing ourselves. It is not easy to imagine the beauty of a town all of whose houses are beautiful, at least unless you have seen (say) Rouen or Oxford thirty years ago. But what a strange state art must be in when we either won't or can't take any trouble to make our houses fit for reasonable human beings to live in! Cannot, I suppose: for once again, except in the rarest cases, rich men's houses are no better than common ones. Excuse an example of this, I beg you. I have lately seen Bournemouth, the watering place south-west of the New Forest. It is a district (scarcely a town) of rich men's houses. There was every inducement there to make them decent, for the place, with its sandy hills and pine-trees, gave really a remarkable site. It would not have taken so very much to have made it romantic. Well, there stand these rich men's houses among the pine-trees and gardens, and not even the pine-trees and gardens can make them tolerable. They are (you must pardon me the word) simply blackguardly, and while I speak they are going on building them by the mile.

And now why cannot we amend all this? Why cannot we have, for instance, simple and beautiful dwellings fit for cultivated, well-mannered men and women, and not for ignorant, purse-proud digesting machines? You may say because we don't wish for them, and that

is true enough ; but that only removes the question a step further, and we must ask : why don't we care about art ? Why has civilised society in all that relates to the beauty of man's handiwork degenerated from the time of the barbarous, superstitious, unpeaceful Middle Ages ? That is indeed a serious question to ask, involving questions still more serious, and the mere mention of which you may resent if I should be forced to speak of them.

I said that the relics of past art which we are driven to study nowadays are of a work which was not merely better than what we do now, but differed in kind from it. Now this difference in kind explains our shortcomings so far, and leaves us only one more question to ask: How shall we remedy the fault ? For the kind of the handiwork of former times down to at least the time of the Renaissance was intelligent work, whereas ours is unintelligent work, or the work of slaves ; surely this is enough to account for the worsening of art, for it means the disappearance of popular art from civilisation. Popular art, that is, the art which is made by the co-operation of many minds and hands varying in kind and degree of talent, but all doing their part in due subordination to a great whole, without any one losing his individuality—the loss of such an art is surely great, nay, inestimable. But hitherto I have only been speaking of the lack of popular art being a grievous loss as a part of wealth ; I have been considering the loss of the thing itself, the loss of the humanising influence which the daily sight of beautiful handiwork brings to bear upon people ; but now, when we are considering the way in which that handiwork was done, and the way in which it is done, the matter becomes more serious still. For

I say unhesitatingly that the intelligent work which produced real art was pleasant to do, was human work, not over burdensome or degrading; whereas the unintelligent work, which produces sham art, is irksome to do, it is unhuman work, burdensome and degrading; so that it is but right and proper that it should turn out nothing but ugly things. And the immediate cause of this degrading labour which oppresses so large a part of our people is the system of the organisation of labour, which is the chief instrument of the great power of modern Europe, competitive commerce. That system has quite changed the way of working in all matters that can be considered as art, and the change is a very much greater one than people know of or think of. In times past these handicrafts were done on a small, almost a domestic, scale by knots of workmen who mostly belonged to organised guilds, and were taught their work soundly, however limited their education was in other respects. There was little division of labour among them; the grades between master and man were not many; a man knew his work from end to end, and felt responsible for every stage of its progress. Such work was necessarily slow to do and expensive to buy; neither was it always finished to the nail; but it was always intelligent work; there was a man's mind in it always, and abundant tokens of human hopes and fears, the sum of which makes life for all of us.

Now think of any kind of manufacture which you are conversant with, and note how differently it is done nowadays; almost certainly the workmen are collected in huge factories, in which labour is divided and subdivided, till a workman is perfectly helpless in his craft if he finds himself without those above to feed his work,

those below to be fed by it. There is a regular hierarchy of masters over him; foreman, manager, clerk, and capitalist, every one of whom is more important than he who does the work. Not only is he not asked to put his individuality into his share of the work, but he is not allowed to. He is but part of a machine, and has but one unvarying set of tasks to do; and when he has once learned these, the more regularly and with the less thought he does them, the more valuable he is. The work turned out by this system is speedily done, and cheap to buy. No wonder, considering the marvellous perfection of the organisation of labour that turns it out, and the energy with which it is carried through. Also, it has a certain high finish, and what I should call shop-counter look, quite peculiar to the wares of this century; but it is of necessity utterly unintelligent, and has no sign of humanity on it; not even so much as to show weariness here and there, which would imply that one part of it was pleasanter to do than another. Whatever art or semblance of art is on it has been doled out with due commercial care, and applied by a machine, human or otherwise, with exactly the same amount of interest in the doing it as went to the non-artistic parts of the work. Again I say that if such work were otherwise than ugly and despicable to look at one's sense of justice would be shocked; for the labour which went to the making of it was thankless and unpleasurable, little more than a mere oppression on the workman.

Must this sort of work last for ever? As long as it lasts the mass of the people can have no share in art; the only handicraftsmen who are free are the artists, as we call them to-day, and even they are hindered and

oppressed by the oppression of their fellows. Yet I know that this machine-organised labour is necessary to competitive commerce; that is to say, to the present constitution of society; and probably most of you think that speculation on a root and branch change in that is mere idle dreaming. I cannot help it; I can only say that that change must come, or at least be on the way, before art can be made to touch the mass of the people. To some that may seem an unimportant matter. One must charitably hope that such people are blind on the side of art, which I imagine is by no means an uncommon thing; and that blindness will entirely prevent them from understanding what I have been saying as to the pleasure which a good workman takes in his handiwork. But all those who know what art means will agree with me in asserting that pleasure is a necessary companion to the making of everything that can be called a work of art. To those, then, I appeal and ask them to consider if it is fair and just that only a few among the millions of civilisation shall be partakers in a pleasure which is the surest and most constant of all pleasures, the unfailing solace of misfortune, happy and honourable work. Let us face the truth, and admit that a society which allows little other human and undegrading pleasure to the greater part of its toilers save the pleasure that comes of rest after the torment of weary work—that such a society should not be stable if it is; that it is but natural that such a society should be honeycombed with corruption and sick with oft-repeated sordid crimes.

Anyhow, dream or not as we may about the chances of a better kind of life which shall include a fair share of art for most people, it is no dream, but a certainty, that change is going on around us, though whitherward

the change is leading us may be a matter of dispute. Most people though, I suppose, will be inclined to think that everything tends to favour the fullest development of competitive commerce and the utmost perfection of the system of labour which it depends upon. I think that is likely enough, and that things will go on quicker and quicker till the last perfection of blind commercial war has been reached; and then? May the change come with as little violence and suffering as may be!

It is the business of all of us to do our best to that end of preparing for change, and so softening the shock of it; to leave as little as possible that must be destroyed to be destroyed suddenly and by violence of some sort or other. And in no direction, it seems to me, can we do more useful work in forestalling destructive revolution than in being beforehand with it in trying to fill up the gap that separates class from class. Here is a point surely where competitive commerce has disappointed our hopes; she has been ready enough to attack the privilege of feudality, and successful enough in doing it, but in levelling the distinctions between upper and middle classes, between gentleman and commoner, she has stopped as if enough had been done: for, alas, most men will be glad enough to level down to themselves, and then hold their hands obstinately enough. But note what stopping short here will do for us. It seems to me more than doubtful, if we go no further, whether we had better have gone as far; for the feudal and hierarchical system under which the old guild brethren whose work I have been praising lived, and which undoubtedly had something to do with the intelligence and single-heartedness of their work; this system, while it divided men rigorously into castes, did not actually busy

itself to degrade them by forcing on them violent contrasts of cultivation and ignorance. The difference between lord and commoner, noble and burgher, was purely arbitrary; but how does it fare now with the distinction between class and class? Is it not the sad fact that the difference is no longer arbitrary but real? Down to a certain class, that of the educated gentleman, as he is called, there is indeed equality of manners and bearing, and if the commoners still choose to humble themselves and play the flunkey, that is their own affair; but below that class there is, as it were, the stroke of a knife, and gentlemen and non-gentlemen divide the world.

Just think of the significance of one fact; that here in England in the nineteenth century, among all the shouts of progress that have been raised for many years, the greater number of people are doomed by the accident of their birth to misplace their aitches; that there are two languages talked in England: gentleman's English and workman's English. I do not care who gainsays it, I say that this is barbarous and dangerous; and it goes step by step with the lack of art which the same classes are forced into; it is a token, in short, of that vulgarity, to use a hateful word, which was not in existence before modern times and the blossoming of competitive commerce.

Nor, on the other hand, does modern class-division really fall much short of the caste system of the Middle Ages. It is pretty much as exclusive as that was. Excuse an example: I was talking with a lady friend of mine the other day who was puzzled as to what to do with her growing son, and we discussed the possibility of his taking to one of the crafts, trades as we call them now: say cabinetmaking. Now neither of us was

much cumbered with social prejudices, both of us had a wholesome horror of increasing the army of London clerks, yet we were obliged to admit that unless a lad were of strong character and could take the step with his own eyes open and face the consequences on his own account, the thing could not be done; it would be making him either a sort of sloppy amateur or an involuntary martyr to principle. Well really after that we do not seem to have quite cast off even the mere mediæval superstition founded, I take it, on the exclusiveness of Roman landlordism (for our Gothic forefathers were quite free from the twaddle), that handiwork is a degrading occupation. At first sight the thing seems so monstrous that one almost expects to wake up from a confused dream and find oneself in the reign of Henry the Eighth, with the whole paraphernalia in full blossom, from the divine right of kings downwards. Why in the name of patience should a carpenter be a worse gentleman than a lawyer? His craft is a much more useful one, much harder to learn, and at the very worst, even in these days, much pleasanter; and yet, you see, we gentlemen and ladies durst not set our sons to it unless we have found them to be enthusiasts or philosophers who can accept all consequences and despise the opinion of the world; in which case they will lie under the ban of that terrible adjective, eccentric.

Well, I have thought we might deduce part of this folly from a superstition of past ages, that it was partly a remnant of the accursed tyranny of ancient Rome; but there is another side to the question which puts a somewhat different face upon it. I bethink me that amongst other things the lady said to me: "You

know, I wouldn't mind a lad being a cabinetmaker if he only made 'Art' furniture." Well, there you see! she naturally, as a matter of course, admitted what I have told you this evening is a fact, that even in a craft so intimately connected with fine art as cabinetmaking there could be two classes of goods, one the common one, quite without art; the other exceptional and having a sort of artificial art, so to say, tacked on to it. But furthermore, the thought that was in her mind went tolerably deep into the matter, and cleaves close to our subject; for in fact these crafts are so mechanical as they are now carried on, that they don't exercise the intellectual part of a man; no, scarcely at all; and perhaps after all, in these days, when privilege is on its deathbed, that has something to do with the low estimate that is made of them. You see, supposing a young man to enter the cabinetmaker's craft, for instance (one of the least mechanical, even at present); when he had attained to more than average skill in it, his next ambition would be to better himself, as the phrase goes; that is, either to take to some other occupation thought more gentlemanly, or to become, not a master cabinetmaker, but a capitalist employer of cabinetmakers. Thus the crafts lose their best men because they have not in themselves due reward for excellence. Beyond a certain point you cannot go, and that point is not set high enough. Understand, by reward I don't mean only money wages, but social position, leisure, and above all, the self-respect which comes of our having the opportunity of doing remarkable and individual work, useful for one's fellows to possess, and pleasant for oneself to do; work which at least deserves thanks, whether it gets them or not. Now, mind you, I know well

enough that it is the custom of people when they speak in public to talk largely of the dignity of labour and the esteem in which they hold the working classes, and I suppose while they are speaking they believe what they say; but will their respect for the dignity of labour bear the test I have been speaking of? to wit, will they, can they, being of the upper or middle classes, put their sons to this kind of labour? Do they think that, so doing, they will give their children a good prospect in life? It does not take long to answer that question, and I repeat that I consider it a test question; therefore I say that the crafts are distinctly marked as forming part of a lower class, and that this stupidity is partly the remnant of the prejudices of the hierarchical society of the Middle Ages, but also is partly the result of the reckless pursuit of riches, which is the main aim of competitive commerce. Moreover, this is the worst part of the folly, for the mere superstition would of itself wear away, and not very slowly either, before political and social progress; but the side of it which is fostered by competitive commerce is more enduring, for there is reality about it. The crafts really are degraded, and the classes that form them are only kept sweet by the good blood and innate good sense of the workmen as men out of their working hours, and by their strong political tendencies, which are wittingly or unwittingly at war with competitive commerce, and may, I hope, be trusted slowly to overthrow it. Meanwhile, I believe this degradation of craftsmanship to be necessary to the perfection and progress of competitive commerce; the degradation of craftsmanship, or, in other words, the extinction of art. That is such a heavy accusation to bring against the system, that, crazy as you may think me, I

am bound to declare myself in open rebellion against it; against, I admit it, the mightiest power which the world has ever seen. Mighty, indeed, yet mainly to destroy, and therefore I believe short-lived; since all things which are destructive bear their own destruction with them.

And now I want to get back before I finish to my first three words, Art, Wealth, and Riches. I can conceive that many people would be like to say to me: You declare yourself in rebellion against the system which creates wealth for the world. It is just that which I deny; it is the destruction of wealth of which I accuse competitive commerce. I say that wealth, or the material means for living a decent life, is created in spite of that system, not because of it. To my mind real wealth is of two kinds; the first kind, food, raiment, shelter, and the like; the second, matters of art and knowledge; that is, things good and necessary for the body, and things good and necessary for the mind. Many other things than these is competitive commerce busy about, some of them directly injurious to the life of man, some merely encumbrances to its honourable progress; meanwhile the first of these two kinds of real wealth she largely wastes, the second she largely destroys. She wastes the first by unjust and ill-managed distribution of the power of acquiring wealth, which we call shortly money; by urging people to the reckless multiplication of their kind, and by gathering population into unmanageable aggregations to satisfy her ruthless greed, without the least thought of their welfare.

As for the second kind of wealth, mental wealth, in many ways she destroys it; but the two ways which most concern our subject to-night are these: first, the reckless destruction of the natural beauty of the earth,

which compels the great mass of the population, in this country at least, to live amidst ugliness and squalor so revolting and disgusting that we could not bear it unless habit had made us used to it; that is to say, unless we were far advanced on the road towards losing some of the highest and happiest qualities which have been given to men. But the second way by which competitive commerce destroys our mental wealth is yet worse: it is by the turning of almost all handicraftsmen into machines; that is to say, compelling them to work which is unintelligent and unhuman, a mere weariness to be borne for the greater part of the day; thus robbing men of the gain and victory which long ages of toil and thought have won from stern hard nature and necessity, man's pleasure and triumph in his daily work.

I tell you it is not wealth which our civilisation has created, but riches, with its necessary companion poverty; for riches cannot exist without poverty, or in other words slavery. All rich men must have some one to do their dirty work, from the collecting of their unjust rents to the sifting of their ash heaps. Under the dominion of riches we are masters and slaves instead of fellow-workmen as we should be. If competitive commerce creates wealth, then should England surely be the wealthiest country in the world, as I suppose some people think it is, and as it is certainly the richest; but what shabbiness is this rich country driven into? I belong, for instance, to a harmless little society whose object is to preserve for the public now living and to come the wealth which England still possesses in historical and beautiful buildings; and I could give you a long and dismal list of buildings which England, with

all her riches, has not been able to save from commercial greed in some form or another. "It's a matter of money" is supposed to be an unanswerable argument in these cases, and indeed we generally find that if we answer it our answer is cast on the winds. Why, to this day in England (in England only, I believe, amongst civilised countries) there is no law to prevent a madman or an ignoramus from pulling down a house which he chooses to call his private property, though it may be one of the treasures of the land for art and history.

Or again, of how many acres of common land has riches robbed the country, even in this century? a treasure irreplaceable, inestimable, in these days of teeming population. Yet where is the man who dares to propose a measure for the reinstatement of the public in its rights in this matter? How often, once more, have railway companies been allowed for the benefit of the few to rob the public of treasures of beauty that can never be replaced, owing to the cowardly and anarchical maxims which seem always to be favoured by those who should be our guardians herein; but riches has no bowels except for riches. Or you of this part of the country, what have you done with Lancashire? It does not seem to be above ground. I think you must have been poor indeed to have been compelled to bury it. Were not the brown moors and the meadows, the clear streams and the sunny skies wealth? Riches has made a strange home for you. Some of you, indeed, can sneak away from it sometimes to Wales, to Scotland, to Italy; some, but very few. I am sorry for you; and for myself too, for that matter, for down by the Thames-side there we are getting rid of the earth

as fast as we can also; most of Middlesex, most of Surrey, and huge cantles of Essex and Kent are buried mountains deep under fantastic folly or hideous squalor; and no one has the courage to say: "Let us seek a remedy while any of our wealth in this kind is left us."

Or, lastly, if all these things may seem light matters to some of you, grievously heavy as they really are, no one can think lightly of those terrible stories we have been hearing lately of the housing of poor people in London; indeed and indeed no country which can bear to sit quiet under such grievances has any right to be called wealthy. Yet you know very well that it will be long indeed before any party or any Government will have the courage to face the subject, dangerous as they must needs know it is to shut their eyes to it.

And what is to amend these grievances? You must not press me too close on that point. I believe I am in such a very small minority on these matters that it is enough for me if I find here and there some one who admits the grievances; for my business herein is to spread discontent. I do not think that this is an unimportant office; for, as discontent spreads, the yearning for bettering the state of things spreads with it, and the longing of many people, when it has grown deep and strong, melts away resistance to change in a sure, steady, unaccountable manner. Yet I will, with your leave, tell the chief things which I really want to see changed, in case I have not spoken plainly enough hitherto, and lest I should seem to have nothing to bid you to but destruction, the destruction of a system by some thought to have been made to last for ever. I want, then, all persons to be educated according to their capacity, not according to the amount of money

which their parents happen to have. I want all persons to have manners and breeding according to their innate goodness and kindness, and not according to the amount of money which their parents happen to have. As a consequence of these two things I want to be able to talk to any of my countrymen in his own tongue freely, and feeling sure that he will be able to understand my thoughts according to his innate capacity; and I also want to be able to sit at table with a person of any occupation without a feeling of awkwardness and constraint being present between us. I want no one to have any money except as due wages for work done; and, since I feel sure that those who do the most useful work will neither ask nor get the highest wages, I believe that this change will destroy that worship of a man for the sake of his money, which everybody admits is degrading, but which very few indeed can help sharing in. I want those who do the rough work of the world, sailors, miners, ploughmen, and the like, to be treated with consideration and respect, to be paid abundant money-wages, and to have plenty of leisure. I want modern science, which I believe to be capable of overcoming all material difficulties, to turn from such preposterous follies as the invention of anthracine colours and monster cannon to the invention of machines for performing such labour as is revolting and destructive of self-respect to the men who now have to do it by hand. I want handicraftsmen proper, that is, those who make wares, to be in such a position that they may be able to refuse to make foolish and useless wares, or to make the cheap and nasty wares which are the mainstay of competitive commerce, and are indeed slave-wares, made by and for slaves.

And in order that the workmen may be in this position, I want division of labour restricted within reasonable limits, and men taught to think over their work and take pleasure in it. I also want the wasteful system of middlemen restricted, so that workmen may be brought into contact with the public, who will thus learn something about their work, and so be able to give them due reward of praise for excellence.

Furthermore, I want the workmen to share the good fortunes of the business which they uphold, in due proportion to their skill and industry, as they must in any case share its bad fortunes. To which end it would be necessary that those who organise their labour should be paid no more than due wages for their work, and should be chosen for their skill and intelligence, and not because they happen to be the sons of money-bags. Also I want this, and, if men were living under the conditions I have just claimed for them, I should get it, that these islands which make the land we love should no longer be treated as here a cinder heap, and there a game preserve, but as the fair green garden of Northern Europe, which no man on any pretence should be allowed to befoul or disfigure. Under all these conditions I should certainly get the last want accomplished which I am now going to name. I want all the works of man's hand to be beautiful, rising in fair and honourable gradation from the simplest household goods to the stately public building, adorned with the handiwork of the greatest masters of expression which that real new birth and the dayspring of hope come back will bring forth for us.

These are the foundations of my Utopia, a city in which riches and poverty will have been conquered by

wealth; and however crazy you may think my aspirations for it, one thing at least I am sure of, that henceforward it will be no use looking for popular art except in such an Utopia, or at least on the road thither; a road which, in my belief, leads to peace and civilisation, as the road away from it leads to discontent, corruption, tyranny, and confusion. Yet it may be we are more nearly on the road to it than many people think; and however that may be, I am cheered somewhat by thinking that the very small minority to which I belong is being helped by every one who is of goodwill in social matters. Every one who is pushing forward education helps us; for education, which seems such a small power to classes which have been used to some share of it for generations, when it reaches those who have grievances which they ought not to bear spreads deep discontent among them, and teaches them what to do to make their discontent fruitful. Every one who is striving to extinguish poverty is helping us; for one of the greatest causes of the dearth of popular art and the oppression of joyless labour is the necessity that is imposed on modern civilisation for making miserable wares for miserable people, for the slaves of competitive commerce. All who assert public rights against private greed are helping us; every foil given to common-stealers, or railway-Philistines, or smoke-nuisance-breeders, is a victory scored to us. Every one who tries to keep alive traditions of art by gathering together relics of the art of bygone times, still more if he is so lucky as to be able to lead people by his own works to look through Manchester smoke and squalor to fair scenes of unspoiled nature or deeds of past history, is helping us. Every one who tries to bridge the gap between the

classes, by helping the opening of museums and galleries and gardens and other pleasures which can be shared by all, is helping us. Every one who tries to stir up intelligence in their work in workmen, and more especially every one who gives them hope in their work and a sense of self-respect and responsibility to the public in it, by such means as industrial partnerships and the like, is helping the cause most thoroughly.

These, and such as these, are our helpers, and give us a kind of hope that the time may come when our views and aspirations will no longer be considered rebellious, and when competitive commerce will be lying in the same grave with chattel slavery, with serfdom, and with feudalism. Or rather, certainly the change will come, however long we shall have been dead by then; how, then, can we prevent its coming with violence and injustice that will breed other grievances in time, to be met by fresh discontent? Once again, how good it were to destroy all that must be destroyed gradually and with a good grace!

Here in England, we have a fair house full of many good things, but cumbered also with pestilential rubbish. What duty can be more pressing than to carry out the rubbish piecemeal and burn it outside, lest some day there be no way of getting rid of it but by burning it up inside with the goods and house and all?

IV

ART AND SOCIALISM

THE AIMS AND IDEALS OF THE ENGLISH SOCIALISTS OF TO-DAY

A LECTURE DELIVERED BEFORE THE SECULAR SOCIETY OF LEICESTER, 23RD JANUARY 1884.

My friends, I want you to look into the relation of Art to Commerce, using the latter word to express what is generally meant by it; namely, that system of competition in the market which is indeed the only form which most people nowadays suppose that Commerce can take. Now whereas there have been times in the world's history when Art held the supremacy over Commerce; when Art was a good deal, and Commerce, as we understood the word, was a very little; so now on the contrary it will be admitted by all, I fancy, that Commerce has become of very great importance and Art of very little. I say this will be generally admitted, but different persons will hold very different opinions not only as to whether this is well or ill, but even as to what it really means when we say that Commerce has become of supreme importance and that Art has sunk into an unimportant matter.

Allow me to give you my opinion of the meaning of it: which will lead me on to ask you to consider

what remedies should be applied for curing the evils that exist in the relations between Art and Commerce. Now to speak plainly it seems to me that the supremacy of Commerce (as we understand the word) is an evil, and a very serious one; and I should call it an unmixed evil but for the strange continuity of life which runs through all historical events, and by means of which the very evils of such and such a period tend to abolish themselves. For to my mind it means this: that the world of modern civilisation in its haste to gain a very inequitably divided material prosperity has entirely suppressed popular Art; or in other words that the greater part of the people have no share in Art, which as things now are must be kept in the hands of a few rich or well-to-do people, who we may fairly say need it less and not more than the laborious workers. Nor is that all the evil, nor the worst of it; for the cause of this famine of Art is that whilst people work throughout the civilised world as laboriously as ever they did, they have lost, in losing an Art which was done by and for the people, the natural solace of their labour; a solace which they once had, and always should have; the opportunity of expressing their own thoughts to their fellows by means of that very labour, by means of that daily work which nature or long custom, a second nature, does indeed require of them, but without meaning that it should be an unrewarded and repulsive burden. But, through a strange blindness and error in the civilisation of these latter days, the world's work, almost all of it, the work some share of which should have been the helpful companion of every man, has become even such a burden, which every man, if he could, would shake off. I have said that people work no less laboriously than they ever

did; but I should have said that they work more laboriously. The wonderful machines which in the hands of just and foreseeing men would have been used to minimise repulsive labour and to give pleasure, or in other words added life, to the human race, have been so used on the contrary that they have driven all men into mere frantic haste and hurry, thereby destroying pleasure, that is life, on all hands: they have, instead of lightening the labour of the workmen, intensified it, and thereby added more weariness yet to the burden which the poor have to carry.

Nor can it be pleaded for the system of modern civilisation that the mere material or bodily gains of it balance the loss of pleasure which it has brought upon the world; for as I hinted before those gains have been so unfairly divided that the contrast between rich and poor has been fearfully intensified, so that in all civilised countries, but most of all in England, the terrible spectacle is exhibited of two peoples living street by street and door by door, people of the same blood, the same tongue, and at least nominally living under the same laws, but yet one civilised and the other uncivilised. All this I say is the result of the system that has trampled down Art, and exalted Commerce into a sacred religion; and it would seem is ready, with the ghastly stupidity which is its principal characteristic, to mock the Roman satirist for his noble warning by taking it in inverse meaning, and now bids us all for the sake of life to destroy the reasons for living.

And now in the teeth of this stupid tyranny I put forward a claim on behalf of labour enslaved by Commerce, which I know no thinking man can deny is reasonable, but which if acted on would involve such a

change as would defeat Commerce; that is, would put Association instead of Competition, Social Order instead of Individualist Anarchy. Yet I have looked at this claim by the light of history and my own conscience, and it seems to me so looked at to be a most just claim, and that resistance to it means nothing short of a denial of the hope of civilisation. This then is the claim: *It is right and necessary that all men should have work to do which shall be worth doing, and be of itself pleasant to do; and which should be done under such conditions as would make it neither over-wearisome nor over-anxious.* Turn that claim about as I may, think of it as long as I can, I cannot find that it is an exorbitant claim; yet again I say if Society would or could admit it, the face of the world would be changed; discontent and strife and dishonesty would be ended. To feel that we were doing work useful to others and pleasant to ourselves, and that such work and its due reward could not fail us! What serious harm could happen to us then? And the price to be paid for so making the world happy is Revolution: Socialism instead of Laissez faire.

How can we of the middle classes help to bring such a state of things about: a state of things as nearly as possible the reverse of the present state of things? The reverse; no less than that. For first, THE WORK MUST BE WORTH DOING: think what a change that would make in the world! I tell you I feel dazed at the thought of the immensity of work which is undergone for the making of useless things. It would be an instructive day's work for any one of us who is strong enough to walk through two or three of the principal streets of London on a week-day, and

take accurate note of everything in the shop windows which is embarrassing or superfluous to the daily life of a serious man. Nay, the most of these things no one, serious or unserious, wants at all; only a foolish habit makes even the lightest-minded of us suppose that he wants them, and to many people even of those who buy them they are obvious encumbrances to real work, thought, and pleasure. But I beg you to think of the enormous mass of men who are occcupied with this miserable trumpery, from the engineers who have had to make the machines for making them, down to the hapless clerks who sit daylong year after year in the horrible dens wherein the wholesale exchange of them is transacted, and the shopmen who, not daring to call their souls their own, retail them amidst numberless insults which they must not resent, to the idle public which doesn't want them, but buys them to be bored by them and sick to death of them. I am talking of the merely useless things; but there are other matters not merely useless, but actively destructive and poisonous, which command a good price in the market; for instance, adulterated food and drink. Vast is the number of slaves whom competitive Commerce employs in turning out infamies such as these. But quite apart from them there is an enormous mass of labour which is just merely wasted; many thousands of men and women making Nothing with terrible and inhuman toil which deadens the soul and shortens mere animal life itself.

All these are the slaves of what is called luxury, which in the modern sense of the word comprises a mass of sham wealth, the invention of competitive Commerce, and enslaves not only the poor people who are compelled to work at its production, but also the foolish

and not over happy people who buy it to harass themselves with its encumbrance. Now if we are to have popular Art, or indeed Art of any kind, we must at once and for all be done with this luxury; it is the supplanter, the changeling of Art; so much so that by those who know of nothing better it has even been taken for Art, the divine solace of human labour, the romance of each day's hard practice of the difficult art of living. But I say Art cannot live beside it, nor self-respect in any class of life. Effeminacy and brutality are its companions on the right hand and the left. This, first of all, we of the well-to-do classes must get rid of if we are serious in desiring the new birth of Art: and if not, then corruption is digging a terrible pit of perdition for society, from which indeed the new birth may come, but surely from amidst of terror, violence, and misery. Indeed if it were but ridding ourselves, the well-to-do people, of this mountain of rubbish, that would be something worth doing: things which everybody knows are of no use; the very capitalists know well that there is no genuine healthy demand for them, and they are compelled to foist them off on the public by stirring up a strange feverish desire for petty excitement, the outward token of which is known by the conventional name of fashion, a strange monster born of the vacancy of the lives of rich people, and the eagerness of competitive Commerce to make the most of the huge crowd of workmen whom it breeds as unregarded instruments for what is called the making of money.

Do not think it a little matter to resist this monster of folly; to think for yourselves what you yourselves really desire, will not only make men and women of you

so far, but may also set you thinking of the due desires of other people, since you will soon find when you get to know a work of art, that slavish work is undesirable. And here furthermore is at least a little sign whereby to distinguish between a rag of fashion and a work of art: whereas the toys of fashion when the first gloss is worn off them do become obviously worthless even to the frivolous, a work of art, be it never so humble, is long lived; we never tire of it; as long as a scrap hangs together it is valuable and instructive to each new generation. All works of art in short have the property of becoming venerable amidst decay; and reason good, for from the first there was a soul in them, the thought of man, which will be visible in them so long as the body exists in which they were implanted.

And that last sentence brings me to considering the other side of the necessity for labour only occupying itself in making goods that are worth making. Hitherto we have been thinking of it only from the user's point of view; even so looked at it was surely important enough; yet from the other side, as to the producer, it is far more important still. For I say again that in buying these things

'Tis the lives of men you buy!

Will you from mere folly and thoughtlessness make yourselves partakers of the guilt of those who compel their fellow-men to labour uselessly? For when I said it was necessary for all things made to be worth making, I set up that claim chiefly on behalf of Labour; since the waste of making useless things grieves the workman doubly. As part of the public he is forced into buying them, and the more part of his miserable wages is

squeezed out of him by an universal kind of truck system; as one of the producers he is forced into making them, and so into losing the very foundations of that pleasure in daily work which I claim as his birthright; he is compelled to labour joylessly at making the poison which the truck system compels him to buy. So that the huge mass of men who are compelled by folly and greed to make harmful and useless things are sacrificed to Society. I say that this would be terrible and unendurable even though they were sacrificed to the good of Society, if that were possible; but if they are sacrificed not for the welfare of Society but for its whims, to add to its degradation, what do luxury and fashion look like then? On one side ruinous and wearisome waste leading through corruption to corruption on to complete cynicism at last, and the disintegration of all Society; and on the other side implacable oppression destructive of all pleasure and hope in life, and leading —whitherward?

Here then is one thing for us of the middle classes to do before we can clear the ground for the new birth of Art, before we can clear our own consciences of the guilt of enslaving men by their labour. One thing; and if we could do it perhaps that one thing would be enough, and all other healthy changes would follow it: but can we do it? Can we escape from the corruption of Society which threatens us? Can the middle classes regenerate themselves? At first sight one would say that a body of people so powerful, who have built up the gigantic edifice of modern Commerce, whose science, invention, and energy have subdued the forces of nature to serve their everyday purposes, and who guide the organisation that keeps these natural powers in subjec-

tion in a way almost miraculous; at first sight one would say surely such a mighty mass of wealthy men could do anything they please. And yet I doubt it: their own creation, the Commerce they are so proud of, has become their master; and all we of the well-to-do classes, some of us with triumphant glee, some with dull satisfaction, and some with sadness of heart, are compelled to admit not that Commerce was made for man, but that man was made for Commerce.

On all sides we are forced to admit it. There are of the English middle class to-day, for instance, men of the highest aspirations towards Art, and of the strongest will; men who are most deeply convinced of the necessity to civilisation of surrounding men's lives with beauty; and many lesser men, thousands for what I know, refined and cultivated, follow them and praise their opinions. But both the leaders and the led are incapable of saving so much as half-a-dozen commons from the grasp of inexorable Commerce: they are as helpless in spite of their culture and their genius as if they were just so many over-worked shoemakers. Less lucky than King Midas, our green fields and clear waters, nay, the very air we breathe are turned not to gold (which might please some of us for an hour maybe) but to dirt; and to speak plainly we know full well that under the present gospel of Capital not only there is no hope of bettering it, but that things grow worse year by year, day by day. Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die, choked by filth.

Or let me give you a direct example of the slavery to competitive Commerce, in which we hapless folk of the middle classes live. I have exhorted you to the putting away of luxury, to the stripping yourselves of

useless encumbrances, to the simplification of life, and I believe that there are not a few of you that heartily agree with me on that point. Well, I have long thought that one of the most revolting circumstances that cling to our present class-system is the relation between us of the well-to-do and our domestic servants: we and our servants live together under one roof, but are little better than strangers to each other, in spite of the good nature and good feeling that often exists on both sides: nay, strangers is a mild word; though we are of the same blood, bound by the same laws, we live together like people of different tribes. Now think how this works on the job of getting through the ordinary day's work of a household, and whether our lives can be simplified while such a system lasts. To go no further, you who are housekeepers know full well (as I myself do, since I have learnt the useful art of cooking a dinner) how it would simplify the day's work, if the chief meals could be eaten in common; if there had not got to be double meals, one upstairs, another downstairs. And again, surely we of this educational century cannot be ignorant of what an education it would be for the less refined members of a household to meet on common easy terms the more refined once a day at least; to note the elegant manners of well-bred ladies, to give and take in talk with learned and travelled men, with men of action and imagination: believe me, that would beat elementary education.

Furthermore this matter cleaves close to our subject of Art: for note, as a token of this stupidity of our sham civilisation, what foolish rabbit warrens our well-to-do houses are obliged to be; instead of being planned in the rational ancient way which was used

from the time of Homer to past the time of Chaucer, a big hall, to wit, with a few chambers tacked on to it for sleeping or sulking in. No wonder our houses are cramped and ignoble when the lives lived in them are cramped and ignoble also. Well, and why don't we who have thought of this, as I am sure many of us have, change this mean and shabby custom, simplifying our lives thereby and educating our friends, to whose toil we owe so many comforts? Why do not you and I set about doing this to-morrow? Because we cannot: because our servants wouldn't have it, knowing, as we know, that both parties would be made miserable by it. The civilisation of the nineteenth century forbids us to share the refinement of a household among its members! So you see, if we middle-class people belong to a powerful folk, and in good sooth we do, we are but playing a part played in many a tale of the world's history: we are great but hapless; we are important dignified people, but bored to death; we have bought our power at the price of our liberty and our pleasure. So I can say in answer to the question: Can we put luxury from us and live simple and decent lives? Yes, when we are free from the slavery of Capitalist Commerce; but not before.

Surely there are some of you who long to be free; who have been educated and refined, and had your perceptions of beauty and order quickened only that they might be shocked and wounded at every turn by the brutalities of competitive Commerce; who have been so hunted and driven by it that, though you are well-to-do, rich even maybe, you have now nothing to lose from social revolution: love of art, that is to say of the true pleasure of life, has brought you to this,

that you must throw in your lot with that of the wage-slave of competitive Commerce; you and he must help each other and have one hope in common, or you at any rate will live and die hopeless and unhelped. You who long to be set free from the oppression of the money grubbers hope for the day when you will be compelled to be free!

Meanwhile, if otherwise that oppression has left us scarce any work to do worth doing, one thing at least is left us to strive for, the raising of the standard of life where it is lowest, where it is low: that will put a spoke in the wheel of the triumphant car of competitive Commerce. Nor can I conceive of anything more likely to raise the standard of life than the convincing some thousands of those who live by labour of the necessity of their supporting the second part of the claim I have made for Labour; namely THAT THEIR WORK SHOULD BE OF ITSELF PLEASANT TO DO. If we could but convince them that such a strange revolution in Labour as this would be of infinite benefit not to them only, but to all men; and that it is so right and natural that for the reverse to be the case, that most men's work should be grievous to them, is a mere monstrosity of these latter days, which must in the long run bring ruin and confusion on the society that allows it—if we could but convince them, then indeed there would be chance of the phrase Art of the People being something more than a mere word. At first sight, indeed, it would seem impossible to make men born under the present system of Commerce understand that labour may be a blessing to them: not in the sense in which the phrase is sometimes preached to them by those whose labour is light and easily evaded: not as a

necessary task laid by nature on the poor for the benefit of the rich; not as an opiate to dull their sense of right and wrong, to make them sit down quietly under their burdens to the end of time, blessing the squire and his relations: all this they could understand our saying to them easily enough, and sometimes would listen to it I fear with at least a show of complacency, if they thought there were anything to be made out of us thereby. But the true doctrine that labour should be a real tangible blessing in itself to the working man, a pleasure even as sleep and strong drink are to him now: this one might think it hard indeed for him to understand, so different as it is from anything which he has found labour to be.

Nevertheless, though most men's work is only borne as a necessary evil like sickness, my experience as far as it goes is, that whether it be from a certain sacredness in handiwork which does cleave to it even under the worst circumstances, or whether it be that the poor man who is driven by necessity to deal with things which are terribly real, when he thinks at all on such matters, thinks less conventionally than the rich; whatever it may be, my experience so far is that the working man finds it easier to understand the doctrine of the claim of Labour to pleasure in the work itself than the rich or well-to-do man does. Apart from any trivial words of my own, I have been surprised to find, for instance, such a hearty feeling toward John Ruskin among working-class audiences: they can see the prophet in him rather than the fantastic rhetorician, as more superfine audiences do. That is a good omen, I think, for the education of times to come. But we who somehow are so tainted by cynicism, because of our helplessness

in the ugly world which surrounds and presses on us, cannot we somehow raise our own hopes at least to the point of thinking that what hope glimmers on the millions of the slaves of Commerce is something better than a mere delusion, the false dawn of a cloudy midnight with which 'tis only the moon that struggles? Let us call to mind that there yet remain monuments in the world which show us that all human labour was not always a grief and a burden to men. Let us think of the mighty and lovely architecture, for instance, of mediæval Europe: of the buildings raised before Commerce had put the coping stone on the edifice of tyranny by the discovery that fancy, imagination, sentiment, the joy of creation, and the hope of fair fame are marketable articles too precious to be allowed to men who have not the money to buy them, to mere handicraftsmen and day labourers. Let us remember there was a time when men had pleasure in their daily work, but yet, as to other matters, hoped for light and freedom even as they do now: their dim hope grew brighter, and they watched its seeming fulfilment drawing nearer and nearer, and gazed so eagerly on it that they did not note how the ever watchful foe, oppression, had changed his shape and was stealing from them what they had already gained in the days when the light of their new hope was but a feeble glimmer: so they lost the old gain, and for lack of it the new gain was changed and spoiled for them into something not much better than loss.

Betwixt the days in which we now live and the end of the Middle Ages, Europe has gained freedom of thought, increase of knowledge, and huge talent for dealing with the material forces of nature; comparative

political freedom withal and respect for the lives of civilised men, and other gains that go with these things: nevertheless I say deliberately that if the present state of society is to endure, she has bought these gains at too high a price in the loss of the pleasure in daily work which once did certainly solace the mass of men for their fears and oppressions: the death of Art was too high a price to pay for the material prosperity of the middle classes. Grievous indeed it was, that we could not keep both our hands full, that we were forced to spill from one while we gathered with the other: yet to my mind it is more grievous still to be unconscious of the loss; or being dimly conscious of it to have to force ourselves to forget it and to cry out that all is well. For, though all is not well, I know that men's natures are not so changed in three centuries that we can say to all the thousands of years which went before them: You were wrong to cherish Art, and now we have found out that all men need is food and raiment and shelter, with a smattering of knowledge of the material fashion of the universe. Creation is no longer a need of man's soul, his right hand may forget its cunning, and he be none the worse for it.

Three hundred years, a day in the lapse of ages, have not changed man's nature thus utterly, be sure of that: one day we shall win back Art, that is to say the pleasure of life; win back Art again to our daily labour. Where is the hope then? you may say; Show it us! There lies the hope, where hope of old deceived us. We gave up Art for what we thought was light and freedom, but it was less than light and freedom which we bought: the light showed many things to those of the well-to-do who cared to look for them:

the freedom left the well-to-do free enough if they cared to use their freedom; but these were few at the best: to the most of men the light showed them that they need look for hope no more, and the freedom left the most of men free to take at a wretched wage what slave's work lay nearest to them or starve.

There is our hope, I say. If the bargain had been really fair, complete all round, then were there nought else to do but to bury Art, and forget the beauty of life: but now the cause of Art has something else to appeal to; no less than the hope of the people for the happy life which has not yet been granted to them. There is our hope: the cause of Art is the cause of the people. Think of a piece of history, and so hope! Time was when the rule of Rome held the whole world of civilisation in its poisonous embrace. To all men, even the best, as you may see in the very Gospels, that rule seemed doomed to last for ever: nor to those who dwelt under it was there any world worth thinking of beyond it. But the days passed and though none saw a shadow of the coming change, it came none the less, like a thief in the night, and the Barbarians, the world which lay outside the rule of Rome, were upon her; and men blind with terror lamented the change and deemed the world undone by the Fury of the North. But even that fury bore with it things long strange to Rome, which once had been the food its glory fed on: hatred of lies, scorn of riches, contempt of death, faith in the fair fame won by steadfast endurance, honourable love of women: all these things the Northern Fury bore with it, as the mountain torrent bears the gold; and so Rome fell and Europe rose, and the hope of the world was born again. To those that have hearts to

understand, this tale of the past is a parable of the days to come; of the change in store for us hidden in the breast of the Barbarism of civilisation, the Proletariat: and we of the middle class, the strength of the mighty but monstrous system of competitive Commerce, it behoves us to clear our souls of greed and cowardice and to face the change which is now once more on the road; to see the good and the hope it bears with it amidst all its threats of violence, amidst all its ugliness, which was not born of itself but of that which it is doomed to destroy.

Now once more I will say that we well-to-do people, those of us who love Art, not as a toy, but as a thing necessary to the life of man, as a token of his freedom and happiness, have for our best work the raising of the standard of life among the people; or in other words establishing the claim I made for Labour, which I will now put in a different form, that we try to see what chiefly hinders us from making that claim good and what are the enemies to be attacked. Thus then I put the claim again: *Nothing should be made by man's labour which is not worth making, or which must be made by labour degrading to the makers.*

Simple as that proposition is, and obviously right as I am sure it must seem to you, you will find, when you come to consider the matter, that it is a direct challenge to the death to the present system of labour in civilised countries. That system, which I have called competitive Commerce, is distinctly a system of war; that is, of waste and destruction, or you may call it gambling if you will; the point of it being that under it whatever a man gains he gains at the expense of some other man's loss. Such a system does not and cannot

heed whether the matters it makes are worth making; it does not and cannot heed whether those who make them are degraded by their work: it heeds one thing and only one, namely what it calls making a profit; which word has come to be used so conventionally that I must explain to you what it really means, to wit, the plunder of the weak by the strong. Now I say of this system, that it is of its very nature destructive of Art, that is to say of the happiness of life. Whatever consideration is shown for the life of the people in these days, whatever is done which is worth doing, is done in spite of the system and in the teeth of its maxims; and most true it is that we do all of us tacitly at least admit that it is opposed to all the highest aspirations of mankind.

Do we not know, for instance, how those men of genius work who are the salt of the earth, without whom the corruption of Society would long ago have become unendurable? The poet, the artist, the man of science, is it not true that in their fresh and glorious days, when they are in the heyday of their faith and enthusiasm, they are thwarted at every turn by Commercial War, with its sneering question "Will it pay?" Is it not true that when they begin to win worldly success, when they become comparatively rich, in spite of ourselves they seem to us tainted by the contact with the commercial world? Need I speak of great schemes that hang about neglected; of things most necessary to be done, and so confessed by all men, that no one can seriously set a hand to because of the lack of money; while if it be a question of creating or stimulating some foolish whim in the public mind, the satisfaction of which will breed a profit, the money will come in by

the ton? Nay, you know what an old story it is of the wars bred by Commerce in search of new markets, which not even the most peaceable of statesmen can resist; an old story and still it seems for ever new, and now become a kind of grim joke, at which I would rather not laugh if I could help it, but am even forced to laugh from a soul laden with anger.

And all that mastery over the powers of nature which the last hundred years or less have given us: what has it done for us under this system? In the opinion of John Stuart Mill, it was doubtful if all the mechanical inventions of modern times have done anything to lighten the toil of labour: be sure there is no doubt that they were not made for that end, but to make a profit. Those almost miraculous machines, which if orderly forethought had dealt with them might even now be speedily extinguishing all irksome and unintelligent labour, leaving us free to raise the standard of skill of hand and energy of mind in our workmen, and to produce afresh that loveliness and order which only the hand of man guided by his soul can produce; what have they done for us now? Those machines of which the civilised world is so proud, has it any right to be proud of the use they have been put to by commercial war and waste?

I do not think exultation can have a place here: commercial war has made a profit of these wonders; that is to say it has by their means bred for itself millions of unhappy workers, unintelligent machines as far as their daily work goes, in order to get cheap labour, to keep up its exciting but deadly game for ever. Indeed that labour would have been cheap enough, cheap to the commercial war generals, and deadly dear

to the rest of us, but for the seeds of freedom which valiant men of old have sowed amongst us to spring up in our own day into Chartism and Trades Unionism and Socialism, for the defence of order and a decent life. Terrible would have been our slavery, and not of the working classes alone, but for these germs of the change which must be. Even as it is, by the reckless aggregation of machine-workers and their adjoints in the great cities and the manufacturing districts, it has kept down life amongst us and keeps it down to a miserably low standard; so low that any standpoint for improvement is hard even to think of. By the means of speedy communication which it has created, and which should have raised the standard of life by spreading intelligence from town to country, and widely creating modest centres of freedom of thought and habits of culture; by the means of the railways and the like it has gathered to itself fresh recruits for the reserve army of competing lack-alls on which its gambling gains so much depend, stripping the countryside of its population, and extinguishing all reasonable hope and life in the lesser towns.

Nor can I, an artist, think last or least of the outward effects which betoken this rule of the wretched anarchy of commercial war. Think of the spreading sore of London swallowing up with its loathsomeness field and wood and heath without mercy and without hope, mocking our feeble efforts to deal even with its minor evils of smoke-laden sky and befouled river: the black horror and reckless squalor of our manufacturing districts, so dreadful to the senses which are unused to them that it is ominous for the future of the race that any man can live among it in tolerable cheerfulness:

nay, in the open country itself the thrusting aside by miserable jerry-built brick and slate of the solid grey dwellings that are still scattered about, fit emblems in their cheery but beautiful simplicity of the yeomen of the English field, whose destruction at the hands of the as yet young commercial war was lamented so touchingly by the high-minded More and the valiant Latimer. Everywhere in short the change from old to new involves one certainty, whatever else may be doubtful, a worsening of the aspect of the country.

This is the condition of England: of England the country of order, peace, and stability, the land of common sense and practicality; the country to which all eyes are turned of those whose hope is for the continuance and perfection of modern progress. There are countries in Europe whose aspect is not so ruined outwardly, though they may have less of material prosperity, less widespread middle-class wealth to balance the squalor and disgrace I have mentioned: but if they are members of the great commercial whole, through the same mill they have got to go, unless something should happen to turn aside the triumphant march of War Commercial before it reaches the end. That is what three centuries of Commerce have brought that hope to, which sprang up when feudalism began to fall to pieces. What can give us the dayspring of a new hope? What, save general revolt against the tyranny of commercial war? The palliatives over which many worthy people are busying themselves now are useless: because they are but unorganised partial revolts against a vast wide-spreading grasping organisation which will, with the unconscious instinct of a plant, meet every attempt at bettering the condition of the people with an attack on a fresh side;

new machines, new markets, wholesale emigration, the revival of grovelling superstitions, preachments of thrift to lack-alls, of temperance to the wretched; such things as these will baffle at every turn all partial revolts against the monster we of the middle classes have created for our own undoing.

I will speak quite plainly on this matter, though I must say an ugly word in the end if I am to say what I think. The one thing to be done is to set people far and wide to think it possible to raise the standard of life. If you think of it, you will see clearly that this means stirring up general discontent. And now to illustrate that I turn back to my blended claim for Art and Labour, that I may deal with the third clause in it: here is the claim again: *It is right and necessary that all men should have work to do: First, Work worth doing; Second, Work of itself pleasant to do; Third, Work done under such conditions as would make it neither over-wearisome nor over-anxious.*

With the first and second clauses, which are very nearly related to each other, I have tried to deal already. They are as it were the soul of the claim for proper labour; the third clause is the body without which that soul cannot exist. I will extend it in this way, which will indeed partly carry us over ground already covered: *No one who is willing to work should ever fear want of such employment as would earn for him all due necessaries of mind and body.* All due necessaries; what are the due necessaries for a good citizen? First, honourable and fitting work: which would involve giving him a chance of gaining capacity for his work by due education; also, as the work must be worth doing and pleasant to do, it will be found neces-

sary to this end that his position be so assured to him that he cannot be compelled to do useless work, or work in which he cannot take pleasure.

The second necessity is decency of surroundings: including 1. good lodging; 2. ample space; 3. general order and beauty. That is: 1. Our houses must be well built, clean, and healthy. 2. There must be abundant garden space in our towns, and our towns must not eat up the fields and natural features of the country; nay, I demand even that there be left waste places and wilds in it, or romance and poetry, that is Art, will die out amongst us. 3. Order and beauty means that not only our houses must be stoutly and properly built, but also that they be ornamented duly: that the fields be not only left for cultivation, but also that they be not spoilt by it any more than a garden is spoilt: no one for instance to be allowed to cut down, for mere profit, trees whose loss would spoil a landscape: neither on any pretext should people be allowed to darken the daylight with smoke, to befoul rivers, or to degrade any spot of earth with squalid litter and brutal wasteful disorder.

The third necessity is leisure. You will understand that in using that word I imply first that all men must work for some portion of the day, and secondly that they have a positive right to claim a respite from that work: the leisure they have a right to claim must be ample enough to allow them full rest of mind and body: a man must have time for serious individual thought, for imagination, for dreaming even, or the race of men will inevitably worsen. Even of the honourable and fitting work of which I have been speaking, which is a whole heaven asunder from the forced work of the capitalist system, a man must not be asked to give more

than his fair share; or men will become unequally developed, and there will still be a rotten place in society.

Here then I have given you the conditions under which work worth doing and undegrading to do can be done: under no other conditions can it be done: if the general work of the world is not worth doing and undegrading to do it is a mockery to talk of civilisation. Well then, can these conditions be obtained under the present gospel of Capital, which has for its motto "The devil take the hindmost"? Let us look at our claim again in other words: *In a properly ordered state of Society every man willing to work should be ensured: First, Honourable and fitting work; Second, A healthy and beautiful house; Third, Full leisure for rest of mind and body.*

Now I don't suppose that anybody here will deny that it would be desirable that this claim should be satisfied: but what I want you all to think is that it is necessary that it be satisfied; that unless we try our utmost to satisfy it, we are but part and parcel of a society founded on robbery and injustice, condemned by the laws of the universe to destroy itself by its own efforts to exist for ever. Furthermore, I want you to think that as on the one hand it is possible to satisfy this claim, so on the other hand it is impossible to satisfy it under the present plutocratic system, which will forbid us even any serious attempt to satisfy it: the beginnings of Social Revolution must be the foundations of the rebuilding of the Art of the People, that is to say of the Pleasure of Life. To say ugly words again; do we not know that the greater part of men in civilised societies are dirty, ignorant, brutal, or at best, anxious about the next week's subsistence; that they are in short

poor? And we know, when we think of it, that this is unfair. It is an old story of men who have become rich by dishonest and tyrannical means, spending in terror of the future their ill-gotten gains liberally and in charity as 'tis called: nor are such people praised; in the old tales 'tis thought that the devil gets them after all. An old story; but I say, "De te fabula"; of THEE is the story told: THOU art the man! I say that we of the rich and well-to-do classes are daily doing in like wise: unconsciously, or half consciously it may be, we gather wealth by trading on the hard necessity of our fellows, and then we give driblets of it away to those of them who in one way or another cry out loudest to us. Our poor laws, our hospitals, our charities, organised and unorganised, are but tubs thrown to the whale: blackmail paid to lame-foot justice, that she may not hobble after us too fast.

When will the time come when honest and clear-seeing men will grow sick of all this chaos of waste, this robbing of Peter to pay Paul, which is the essence of commercial war? When shall we band together to replace the system whose motto is "The devil take the hindmost" with a system whose motto shall be really and without qualification "One for all and all for one"? Who knows but the time may be at hand, but that we now living may see the beginning of that end which shall extinguish luxury and poverty? when the upper, middle, and lower classes shall have melted into one class, living contentedly a simple and happy life? That is a long sentence to describe the state of things which I am asking you to help to bring about: the abolition of slavery is a shorter one and means the same thing. You may be tempted to think the end not worth striving

for on the one hand, or on the other to suppose, each one of you, that it is so far ahead that nothing serious can be done towards it in our own time, and that you may as well therefore sit quiet and do nothing. Let me remind you how only the other day in the lifetime of the youngest of us many thousand men of our own kindred gave their lives on the battle-field to bring to a happy ending a mere episode in the struggle for the abolition of slavery: they are blessed and happy, for the opportunity came to them, and they seized it and did their best, and the world is the wealthier for it: and if such an opportunity is offered to us shall we thrust it from us that we may sit still in ease of body, in doubt, in disease of soul? These are the days of combat: who can doubt that as he hears all round him the sounds that betoken discontent and hope and fear in high and low, the sounds of awakening courage and awakening conscience? These, I say, are the days of combat, when there is no external peace possible to an honest man; but when for that very reason the internal peace of a good conscience founded on settled convictions is the easier to win, since action for the cause is offered us.

Or will you say that here in this quiet, constitutionally governed country of England there is no opportunity for action offered to us? If we were in gagged Germany, in gagged Austria, in Russia where a word or two might land us in Siberia or the prison of the fortress of Peter and Paul; why then, indeed—Ah! my friends, it is but a poor tribute to offer on the tombs of the martyrs of liberty, this refusal to take the torch from their dying hands! Is it not of Goethe it is told, that on hearing one say he was going to America to begin life again, he replied: "Here is America,

or nowhere"? So for my part I say: "Here is Russia, or nowhere." To say the governing classes in England are not afraid of freedom of speech, therefore let us abstain from speaking freely, is a strange paradox to me. Let us on the contrary press in through the breach which valiant men have made for us: if we hang back we make their labours, their sufferings, their deaths of no account. Believe me, we shall be shown that it is all or nothing: or will any one here tell me that a Russian moujik is in a worse case than a sweating tailor's wage-slave? Do not let us deceive ourselves, the class of victims exists here as in Russia. There are fewer of them? Maybe; then are they of themselves more helpless, and so have more need of our help.

And how can we of the middle classes, we the capitalists, and our hangers-on, help them? By renouncing our class, and on all occasions when antagonism rises up between the classes casting in our lot with the victims: with those who are condemned at the best to lack of education, refinement, leisure, pleasure, and renown; and at the worst to a life lower than that of the most brutal of savages in order that the system of competitive Commerce may endure. There is no other way: and this way, I tell you plainly, will in the long run give us plentiful occasion for self-sacrifice without going to Russia. I feel sure that in this assembly there are some who are steeped in discontent with the miserable anarchy of the century of Commerce: to them I offer a means of renouncing their class by supporting Socialist propaganda in joining the Democratic Federation, which I have the honour of representing before you, and which I believe is the only body in this country which puts forward constructive Socialism as its programme.

This to my mind is opportunity enough for those of us who are discontented with the present state of things and long for an opportunity of renunciation; and it is very certain that in accepting the opportunity you will have at once to undergo some of the inconveniences of martyrdom, though without gaining its dignity at present. You will at least be mocked and laughed at by those whose mockery is a token of honour to an honest man; but you will, I don't doubt it, be looked on coldly by many excellent people, not all of whom will be quite stupid. You will run the risk of losing position, reputation, money, friends even: losses which are certainly pin-pricks to the serious martyrdom I have spoken of, but which none the less do try the stuff a man is made of; all the more as he can escape them with little other reproach of cowardice than that which his own conscience cries out at him. Nor can I assure you that you will for ever escape scot-free from the attacks of open tyranny. It is true that at present capitalist society only looks on Socialism in England with dry grins. But remember that the body of people who have for instance ruined India, starved and gagged Ireland, and tortured Egypt, have capacities in them, some ominous signs of which they have lately shown, for openly playing the tyrants' game nearer home. So on all sides I can offer you a position which involves sacrifice; a position which will give you your America at home, and make you inwardly sure that you are at least of some use to the cause: and I earnestly beg you, those of you who are convinced of the justice of our cause, not to hang back from active participation in a struggle which, who ever helps or who ever abstains from helping, must beyond all doubt end at last in Victory!

V

TEXTILE FABRICS

A LECTURE DELIVERED AT THE INTERNATIONAL HEALTH EXHIBITION, JULY 1884

THE subject I have to speak on is a sufficiently wide one, and I can do little more than hint at points of interest in it for your further thought and consideration; all the more as I think I shall be right in supposing that, except for any one actually engaged in the manufacture of textiles who may be present, you, in common with most educated people at the present day, have very little idea as to how a piece of cloth is made, and not much as to the characteristic differences between the manufactures of diverse periods. However, one limitation to my subject I will at once state: I am going to treat it as an artist and archæologist, not as a manufacturer, as we call it; that is, I shall be considering the wares in question from the point of view of their usefulness (using the word in its widest sense) to the consumer, and not as marketable articles, as subject-matter for exchange. I must assume that the goods I am speaking of were made primarily for use, and only secondarily for sale; that, you see, will limit me to a historical discourse on textile fabrics, since at present those wares, like all other wares of civilised countries, are made primarily for sale, and only secondarily for use.

Now before I begin to speak of the actual history of this important art of weaving, I will run through the various forms of it which it comprises. But first of all it may be necessary to explain three words which I shall be compelled to use: warp, weft, and web; because I have noticed that the writers of leading articles and poetry are sometimes a little vague about the way they use these words. Well, the warp is the set of strained threads, sometimes vertical, sometimes horizontal, on which the work is founded; the weft is the thread which is wafted in and out across this warp, and the woof or web is the product of the two.

As to the kinds of weaving; first there is plain weaving in its simplest form, where the weft crosses the warp regularly and alternately. Of that I need say no more, because I have to speak mostly of the characteristic ornament of the different periods, and this plain weaving is not susceptible of ornament, woven ornament I mean. To obtain that the weft must cross the warp at regular intervals, but not alternately; on the surface either warp or weft must predominate to make a pattern. To speak broadly, in the most ordinary kind of pattern-weaving the threads come to the surface in a regular and mechanical manner. I have not time to explain all the ways in which this is done, but must ask you to accept that simple statement, and allow me to call this kind common figure-weaving. Sometimes, as a subdivision of this common figure-weaving, the warp comes chiefly to the surface, which makes a satin; and also sometimes these warp threads are caught up over wires with a sharp edge, which are pulled out as the work goes on, leaving a surface with a raised pile, that is velvet. In the next kind of weaving the weft

crosses the warp alternately indeed, as in plain unpatterned weaving, but instead of being carried in one stroke all across the web, ends or returns wherever the colour changes, so forming a kind of mosaic of coloured patches; this is tapestry, using the word in its narrowest sense. As a detail of this work I ought to mention that in tapestry-weaving the weft is put in so loosely, driven home so carefully, that the warp is entirely hidden by the weft. That work may be considered as a subdivision of this kind of weaving, where thrums of wool, hair, or silk are knotted into a plain canvas as the work proceeds, so as to form a pile with their cut ends; this is carpet-weaving. Lastly comes a kind of ornamental web, in which the ornament is not produced by weaving, but by painting by hand or printing combined in various ways with dyeing in the piece; we call these printed goods chintzes and so on. Needle-worked embroidery is another way of ornamenting a cloth; but I shall not deal with this form of ornamented cloth.

Now all these manners of weaving have been practised from time immemorial, and are in use to-day, with no more variation of method than what comes from the application of machinery for lifting up the threads of the warp, as in the Jacquard machine, now universally used in civilised countries, and the use of steam-power for throwing the shuttle. These variations of method are of little or no interest from the artistic point of view, and are only used to get more profit out of the production of the goods; they are incidental changes, and not essential. However, ancient as all these methods are, the oldest way of ornamenting a cloth otherwise than by merely painting on it with a pigment (not dyeing), or by embroidery, must

have been the tapestry method, as it requires but a very small amount of technical, though often much artistic, skill. The figured webs of the Homeric poems were probably of this kind of work; in the British Museum there is a scrap of cloth of the ancient Central American civilisation so woven; the patterned cloths of the north of Europe before the fourteenth century were mostly tapestries; the South Kensington Museum has a precious fragment of such work of the eleventh or early twelfth century. Among peoples of higher industrial skill, the common figure-weaving took the place of this technically rude work for ordinary recurring patterns, but tapestry was still used for producing what may fairly be called woven pictures; webs whose elaboration and want of repetition of pattern would scarcely allow of any reasonable effect being produced by mere mechanical weaving.

The painting or printing of cloths is doubtless a very ancient practice; I mean to say, the painting them with dyes, not pigments. The minute and elaborate figure ornament which is shown on some of the Egyptian sculpture has, to me, a look of being done by means of this art; it is a confirmation of this probability that Pliny, in a now famous passage, notices the fact that Egypt in his day practised a certain art of figuring cloth, his description of which leaves no doubt that it was what we should now call madder printing or painting. Of this art I shall have to speak in the notice of dyeing which will conclude this lecture.

So here we have to consider, leaving out plain unornamental weaving: first, common or mechanical weaving, including satin, damask, and velvet; second, tapestry, including carpet-weaving; and third, painting or printing

with dyes. Let us consider briefly the practical history of these three arts; and first the mechanical or common weaving. With wares so perishable as woven cloth, it is not wonderful that we have little real record of the stuffs of antiquity; because the descriptions of the poets and writers of the time cannot be depended on for accuracy, as they of course assumed a general knowledge in their audience of the articles described. The vase-painting and sculpture of the central Greek period give us at all events some idea of the quality of the stuffs worn at the period, and in so doing fully confirm the beautiful and simple description of the fine garment in the Odyssey, which is likened to the inner skin of an onion: a figure of speech which, taken with the representations of delicate cloth in the figure-work of the time of Pericles, and earlier and later, gives one an idea of something like those mixed fabrics of silk and cotton which are still made in Greece and Anatolia. Only you must remember that the early classical peoples at least did not know of either silk or cotton, so that flax was probably the material of these fine garments; and we know by the evidence of the Egyptian tombs that linen was woven there of the utmost delicacy and fineness. I don't suppose we need doubt that mechanical pattern-weaving was practised by the Greeks in their earlier and palmy days, but only, I fancy, for the simpler kinds of patterns in piece goods, diapers, and so forth. I conclude the running borders to have been needle-work, or maybe dye-painting. We have a few representations of looms to help us in looking into this matter, which however do not prove much; they are all vertical, and at first sight look nearly like the looms used throughout the Middle Ages, and to-day at the Gobelins, for tapestry-

weaving. In one which is figured on a tomb at Beni Hassan in Egypt, the details of an ordinary high-warp tapestry loom are all given accurately; but the weavers seem to be weaving nothing but plain cloth; in this loom the cloth is being worked downwards, as in the ordinary tapestry loom. In another representation, taken from a Greek vase of about 400 B.C., Penelope is seated before her famous web, which is being worked in an upright loom; there is only one beam to it, the cloth-beam, and the work is woven upward; the warps are kept at the stretch at the bottom by weights looking too small to be effective; the web is figured, has a border of the ordinary subsidiary patterns of classical art, and a stripe of monsters and winged human figures. It seems to have been concluded that this represents actual tapestry-weaving, but too hastily perhaps, as the high-warp loom only means a certain amount of inconvenience in foregoing the mechanical advantages of the spring-staves worked by treadles. Also this Greek loom of 400 B.C. is in all respects like the looms in use in Iceland and the Faroes within the last sixty years for weaving ordinary cloth, plain or chequered.

So much, and little enough, of the loom-work of the early classical period, a time when the merely industrial arts which were, you must remember, mostly carried out by slave labour, were despised; when private luxury scarcely existed; a fact most happy both for the decency of general life and the glory of the arts. Doubtless the ingenuity of the industrial arts gained much during the later and imperial days of Rome; but there is little direct evidence in the remains, artistic or literary, of the time itself; Pliny, who is very particular on the subject of dyeing, helping us nothing in the matter of weaving.

However, perishable as the actual woven wares are, the art is particularly conservative in design, and when we get nearer to our own epoch we have a certain number of specimens preserved to us from the tenth century downward, which not only show us how people wove in those days, but give us more than a hint of the fashions of centuries before their time. A very small fragment of cloth found at Sion, in Switzerland, gives us doubtless a type of a late Roman figured stuff; the pattern, which repeats in a smallish space, is of a woman seated on a fish-tailed, leopard-headed monster, amongst conventional foliage; the point of it, as an illustration of our history, being that it is designed wholly in the classical manner; so that whatever the date may be, it is absolute evidence, so far as it goes, of the kind of work of the later classical times.

However, it is now time for us to leave this somewhat barren desert of vague poetical descriptions, hasty and generalised drawings on vases or tombs, and very rare scraps of the woven goods themselves, and march into the more fruitful country of the early Middle Ages, which give us quite direct evidence of the arts of weaving of the days of the Byzantine Empire. Now you must remember that whatever share the city of New Rome took in actually producing works of the industrial arts under her emperors, she was at least the foster-mother of those arts for all mediæval Europe, and from her came that influence which brought about the new art of Europe, whose origins are obscure enough till they meet and are fused at Constantinople into a style which for centuries after was world-wide; this was natural enough. Looked upon as an European city, Byzantium was for long the only great city of Europe that

was really alive and dominant in peace and war; as a mistress or an enemy she dealt with all the great birth-countries of art and letters, nay, of human life. India, Mesopotamia, Syria, Persia, Asia Minor, Egypt; the ideas and arts of all these countries touched her, and mingled with the remains of the older art of Greece, from which the academicism of the long Romano-Greek period had not crushed all the life, sorely as it had weighed upon it. Byzantium then, the Byzantium of Justinian and onwards, we must look upon as the capital of the industrial arts, from the sixth to the thirteenth century, and in none of them was her influence more obvious than in that of weaving. One event alone which took place there revolutionised this art in Europe, the introduction of the silkworm in the sixth century; which event has also made it more possible to judge of what was done in early times, because the material having the advantage of not being liable to be moth-eaten, some specimens of early date have been left to us.

It would take us too long to discuss the much disputed question of the actual date of these scraps, such as those found in the tomb of Charles the Great at Aix-la-Chapelle; it is enough for us that, as I have said, they undoubtedly represent the design of the stuffs of Justinian's period, and through that period throw light on the fashions of old Rome, and even of classical Athens. These earliest Byzantine or quasi-Byzantine stuffs are most commonly figured with contiguous circles or wreaths, which enclose divers subjects: sometimes the chariot-race in the Hippodrome, or the consular sacrifice, the Byzantine emperors, as consuls of the Republic, being the chief figures; the lion hunt in the emperor's arena or the park of the Great King; the

gladiator again dealing with his lion in the arena, and probably doing duty for Samson in the eyes of the devout Byzantine Christian; all these subjects take us away into classical times. But there are other subjects within these Byzantine or early mediæval garlands which carry us further back, and hint at a time before the dawn of history, much simpler though they be on the surface; for often these circles are inhabited (to use an heraldic phrase) by beasts, winged or otherwise, griffins, elephants and birds, opposing one another (again in heraldic phrase) on either side of an upright object, sometimes branched, variously. Now, though you may think that this is a very natural way of filling a circle ornamentally, yet I think it has been conclusively proved that these beasts and their dividing object are symbols of ancient worship, the object being perhaps translated by the Zoroastrians as the holy fire, though originally signifying the holy tree, which has played such a curious part in ancient symbolism, or betokening of mysteries.

So then Constantinople takes us back not only to the time of the Cæsars on one side, but on the other also to that of the Great King of Persia, to the Kings of Assyria, the monarchs of Babylon, and far beyond them to the Arcadian people and their astronomical lore. But if Constantinople was the capital of the weaver's art till the twelfth century, during the next two centuries Palermo took her place. The chroniclers tell us that just in the middle of the twelfth century, Roger the Norman, King of Sicily, in a raid he made on the Eastern Empire, took Corinth, Thebes, and Athens, where there was still a considerable silk-weaving industry; and that part of the booty which he carried off from those towns consisted of the silk-weavers themselves and

their families, whom he took back with him to Palermo and established in a royal factory attached to his palace, bidding them teach their mystery to his own people. From that time till past the middle of the mediæval period Sicily was the great workshop for silk goods.

Although this story has been much accepted, told as it was gravely and circumstantially, it must be looked upon as a legend founded on the undoubted fact that in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries Sicily was the headquarters of the silk-weaving craft. The population of Sicily consisted largely of Saracenic tribes, who kept amongst them the skill in the industrial arts which they had acquired (chiefly, no doubt, from Byzantium, though not always directly) in the early Middle Ages; besides Sicily had been a most important outwork of the Byzantine empire in its palmy days; was, in fact, much more important than the towns of Greece proper; and was not at all likely to have lacked its due weaving craft. Altogether it seems extremely unlikely that Roger should have been the first of the Norman kings to set up a royal weaving-shed, especially as the Norman kings from the first had affected to imitate oriental customs, reigning, as I have said, among a population which was really oriental; and this custom of a royal factory, connected as it was with the establishment of the seraglio, which, 'tis said, the Norman kings were not slow to adopt, would have seemed a necessity to a monarch at Palermo long before the time of Roger's raid on Greece. You may note at this place that these weaving-sheds of oriental potentates turned out those rich stuffs which were especially used for presents and robes of honour, and had Arabic writing intermingled with the design; a fact which has served to date some of these webs beyond

dispute, as the writing sometimes includes the name of the reigning prince. A word or two on these written stuffs will have to be said presently.

Anyhow, however the manufacture was established, there is no question that in the fourteenth century Palermo was the headquarters of the silk-weaving craft; and most happily we have abundance of evidence of the kind of work produced there, for a great many fragments have been preserved to us in the treasure-houses of the churches of that and the succeeding century. Nay, even in England, in spite of the Reformation, some evidence is left us of the long way that these beautiful goods travelled; for on the backgrounds of painted panels in the richly adorned screens of our East Anglian churches, and on the robes of the saints depicted thereon, are figured patterns more or less accurately taken from the Sicilian webs, which doubtless formed part of the vestments of the sacristy.

North Germany, where the Reformation went on in its earlier days more peaceably and with less destruction than in England, has, however, been the great storehouse of these invaluable treasures, the sacristy of the Church of St. Mary at Danzig being particularly rich in them. The museums at Vienna, the Louvre, and the South Kensington Museum here are well stocked with examples, which I must say, as to ourselves, are not treated with the respect (by the public, I mean) which they deserve. For I must tell you that these stuffs, designed in the heyday of mediæval art, uniting the wild fancy and luxurious intricacy of the East with the straightforward story-telling imagination and clear definite drawing of mediæval Europe, are the very crown of design as applied to weaving.

To a certain extent they preserved the older fashions, and repeated, though not servilely, the patterns of the Byzantine epoch. The writing on the webs seems to have been used on them as a sort of trade mark, implying that they were of fine oriental manufacture; only for the most part it is mere sham writing, a scrawl which has borrowed certain obvious forms from the real Arabic letters, whose graceful and energetic curves fitted them specially for this kind of written ornament; for the rest, the resources and the ingenuity of structure, the richness of imagination in these stuffs is amazing. Beasts, birds, and compound monsters are frequent, often arranged in opposition on each side of the holy tree or holy fire as aforesaid; but often simply passing their lives in the scenes of nature, and generally admirably drawn as to their characteristics, though of course generalised to suit the somewhat intractable material. Then we have castles, fountains, islands, ships, ship-sails, and other such inanimate objects. Finally the weaver uses the human form often enough, though seldom complete; half-women lean down from palm-trees, emerge from shell-like forms amongst the woods with nets in their hands, spread their floating hair over the whole pattern, water their hounds at the woodland fountains, and so forth. Now and again definite winged angels are introduced. In one whole class of designs a prominent feature is the sun-dog, as it used to be called in the older English tongue, a cloud barely hiding the sun, which sends its straight rays across the design with admirable effect.

And all these things are drawn at once with the utmost delicacy and complete firmness; there is no attempt to involve or obscure anything, yet the beauty of the drawing and the ingenuity of the pattern combined give

us that satisfying sense of ease and mystery which does not force us to keep following for ever the repetition of the pattern; in short, in most of the designs of this place and period there is nothing left to desire either for beauty, fitness, or imagination.

From Palermo the art of silk-weaving found its way into the more northern parts of Italy, and settled definitely at Lucca, the centre of a great silk-growing district, whose manufacture overlaps that of Palermo in date, so that it is not easy to state with any certainty whether such or such a piece of goods was woven at one city or the other. But as the years passed a kind of design peculiarly graceful, but not so strongly accentuated as in the earlier patterns, marks this school; these patterns are generally founded on the vine; birds and animals are often introduced into them, but do not play such a prominent part as in the earlier cloths. As to the technique of these webs of Sicily and Lucca, it is on all sides admirable, and in nothing more so than its simplicity; so fertile was the designer, his work so crisp, elegant, and powerful at once, that it would have been the height of bad taste to complicate or huddle it up with tormenting the web into ribs or stripes or honeycombs or herring-bones, or long weak floats of silk; these are the poor refuges from barrenness of invention which a less artistic age is driven to, and has used, and still uses in a most profuse and wearisome way.

One peculiarity I may note about all these early stuffs; gold is freely used in them, but the gold thread is not like that of our time and some centuries back, to wit, a thin ribbon of gilt silver twisted round a floss silk core, but is made by gilding strips of fine vellum and twisting that round a core of hemp or hard silk. This

plan has both its advantages and disadvantages; it does not wear as well as the wire-twisted thread, but also is not so apt to tarnish. The Chinese still use similar gold thread, only by substituting gilt paper for gilt vellum do not make so good an article.

Before passing to the next century, I must mention that all this while much silk was made in the East. At Cairo and thereabouts was a manufactory of striped silk, in which the Arabic writing, real and finely designed, played a great part; in this work the gold was always flat strips of the gilt parchment which marks the special manufactory. In all cases you must remember there was at this time no essential difference between the ornament of East and West; even in architecture the resemblances are more noticeable than the differences; but of course in the lesser art we are considering the needs of climate, and manners had not the same influence as in architecture; accordingly we find not only the same details but the same patterns in use in Persia and Syria as in Sicily and Italy. It is also interesting to note that pieces of Chinese damask are not seldom to be found as the grounds of needle-embroidered ecclesiastical vestments, whose patterns are identical with those even now woven there.

As to Northern Europe, doubtless the ornamental weaving, which was mostly worsted, was chiefly tapestry work; but it seems that some kind of figured stuff other than that was made. In the edicts of S. Louis mention is made of *tapisserie à la haute lisse*, *tapisserie sarracenoise* (of which more anon); and also of *tapisseries nostrez*, which last are obviously goods made in a long piece for cutting and joining. My own impression is that these *tapisseries nostrez* (judging by the context) were like the rudely flowered stuff traditionally made by the Italian

peasants to-day, in the Abruzzi, for instance, and of which the Roman peasant women's aprons are made. This impression is chiefly founded on the fact that exactly the same make of cloth is woven in Iceland for coverlets, saddle-cloths, and the like, the inference being that it was formerly in use very widely throughout Europe; it seems, however, that early in the fourteenth century there was some sort of silk-weaving and even velvet-weaving in Paris, but I imagine it to have either been plain weaving or tapestry, and the velvet to have been made like a carpet. One may note, as showing clearly that the East made mechanically-woven cloth and the West tapestries, that when the unlucky Frenchmen who were taken by Bajazet at the rout of Nicopolis, in the year 1396, were arranging their ransom with him, and were trying to find out with what rarities they would be likely to soften the heart of their conqueror, they were told that he had a turn for the fine tapestry of Arras, "if so be they were of good ancient stories"; fine linen of Rheims would not come amiss to him either, or fine scarlets (more of those afterwards): "for," said their friends, "as to cloths of silk and gold the king and the lords there in Turkey have of them enough and to spare."

The fifteenth century brings us to Florence and Venice, where the splendid cloths were wrought which were used so profusely in the magnificent stateliness of the later Middle Ages. This is a part of the subject that wants treating clinically, so to say; that is, we should be alongside some of the fine specimens in the best museums in order to make you understand it properly. Nothing can exceed the splendour of some of these Florentine and Venetian webs, whose speciality was a particular kind of rich velvet and gold, often with one pile raised on the

top of another. In these cloths the vellum-twisted gold gives place to gold thread as we know it, but gilded so thickly that it is not uncommon to find specimens where the gold is very little, if at all, tarnished.

Rich and splendid as these cloths are, they have, to a certain extent, lost some of the imaginative interest of the earlier designs; it would not be true to say that they depend on their material for the pleasure they give, because in these great patterns, founded on vegetation of the thistle and artichoke kind, there is a vigour and freedom that is most delightful and captivating; but they are more architectural and less picture-like than the Sicilian stuffs; the strange monsters, the fairy woods and island shores, the damsel-peopled castles, palm-trees and shells, the lions drinking at the woodland fountain, hawk, swan, mallard, and dove, the swallow and her nestlings, and the hot sun breaking through the clouds . . . all these wonders and many another have given place to skilfully and beautifully arranged leaves and tendrils. As we shall see, later on, picture-weaving had reached its height by this time, and there was something of a division of labour between the two kinds of weaving design; at the same time the design was absolutely pure and suitable to its purpose; no atom of corruption had crept in.

Now as to the relation of this design to that of the East; they still marched close together until the false taste of the Renaissance began to affect the later mediæval work. Throughout there is more of distinct elegance in the eastern work, and that more especially in that kind of design which we call Persian.

The sixteenth century saw the change in woven work which fell upon all the architectural arts. I have

said that weaving is conservative of patterns and methods, and this is very obvious in this great period of change; one may say that the oriental-gothic feeling, which was the very well-spring of fine design in this art, lasted side by side with divers new fashions, some of which were merely the outcome of the general pseudo-classical feeling, and shown in detail rather than general arrangement of the pattern, and in some pieces of fantastic ugliness which indicated only too surely the coming degradation of the weaving art.

By the first years of the seventeenth century that degradation had befallen the art in Europe, in fact it was becoming, or had become no longer an art, but a trade, as we very properly nowadays call work, which is really but an accident of the profit-market. I need not, therefore, trace its degradation further, though that degradation was checked, to a certain extent, by the traditions of the better times; and some good work was done until the great flood of the vileness of the eighteenth century swamped everything, and prepared the way for the inanity of the nineteenth; which, in its turn, let us hope, is doomed to prepare the way for a new life once more, even in this small corner of the result of man's intelligence, the textile arts.

Having thus gone very briefly through the story of mechanical weaving, I must now turn back to take up the other side of weaving, and talk of it as producing something which we must call pictures for want of a better word. I have said that in the early days of Greek civilisation the more elaborately figured cloth must have been either embroidery or tapestry; of course in the later classical times, when the mechanical arts had attained a great degree of perfection, some of this elaborate

work might have been done in the mechanical loom; but judging from Ovid's description of the contest between Minerva and Arachne, which at least admits the possibility of weaving quite an elaborate picture (for at least they were not embroidering), tapestry-work must have been practised in classical times. But we need not dwell very long upon these times of uncertain evidence and guess-work, since we have in later times such abundance of clear material for carrying out our inquiries. It is at least pretty certain, as I have already said, that all the more elaborate figured hangings actually made in the north of Europe before the end of the fourteenth century were woven in the tapestry loom; a piece of such work, North German, or perhaps Scandinavian, of the beginning of the twelfth century, is preserved at the South Kensington Museum, and is itself a portion of a larger piece at Lyons. The design of this piece is practically an imitation in tapestry of the mechanically woven patterns of the south-east of Europe; its design being of that kind of contiguous circles enclosing monsters of which I spoke before. It is worth while noting that patterns of exactly the same character have been traditionally used in Iceland till within the last hundred years, only by that time they had got to be done by means of worsted embroidery upon linen. Now of course you understand that these tapestry cloths were done always for special decorative purposes, for wall-hangings and curtains, I mean; their thick, heavy, and rigid texture unfitting them for use as garment cloth to the same degree that it would fit them for use as hangings. As on the one hand the northern craftsmen, who had, by the way, to work chiefly in wool, as I have remarked, had not learned the special mystery of the mechanical

figure-weaver from the East, so also this kind of wall-hanging would be likely in the cold, damp climate of the North to take the place of the wall-pictures which so commonly decorated important buildings in the south of Europe. This in fact happened, and the use of tapestry hangings grew commoner as pictures grew more elaborate; the earlier pictured tapestry hangings partook of the simplicity of the paintings of the time, as one can clearly see by the one or two precious relics of that period which we have left. These simple pictured cloths were no doubt woven all over the north of Europe, but one of the chief places of manufacture in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries was Paris. I have mentioned the edicts of the time of S. Louis which show that the craft of tapestry-weaving, *tapisserie à la haute lisse* as they call it, was an important craft at that time. Later on, in the second half of the fourteenth century, the tapestry-weavers are frequently mentioned at Arras (which city, as you know, has given its name to the whole art), Tournai, Valenciennes, Lille, and Douai; Flanders, in fact, was taking the place in tapestry-weaving which it filled to the end. In the last years of the fourteenth century there is much mention made of the craft, and the names of two designers are mentioned, John of Bruges and Nicholas Battailles, who were both in the employment of Charles the Fifth of France.

There is fortunately a piece of tapestry still in existence of this period, a portion of a great hanging made for the Cathedral of Angers. It represents scenes from the Apocalypse, arranged in frames and divided by figures of the prophets twice the size of life; it is a grand and monumental work, severe in style, and decidedly belonging, especially as to its scheme of decora-

tion, to the fourteenth rather than the fifteenth century, though it was not finished till about 1453. Of about the same period are certain cloths made in Germany on a small scale, not above four feet high or so. These are quaint and playful in subject and design, and have a domestic sort of look about them; in fact I think they were made in the houses they were intended to decorate. The subjects are chiefly secular; scenes from romances, sports and pastimes, the occupations of the months, and so forth; they were probably meant for what were called dorsars, that is, cloths to hang at the backs of the diners' benches in the hall; the South Kensington Museum has some good specimens of these.

From the middle of the fifteenth century the art of tapestry-weaving went on vigorously, and we have many specimens left us of the time, at least of the latter half of the century. It may interest you to hear what some of the subjects of the tapestries were which Sir John Fastolf left behind him at Caistor in Norfolk. You must remember he was a powerful country gentleman, say of second rank. "Imprimis j clothe of Arras, clipped the schipherds clothe. Item j of the Assumpsion of Oure Lady. . . . Item j clothe of IX Conquerouris," the Nine Worthies, doubtless. "Item j clothe of the Siege of Faleys for the west side of the hall. Item j clothe of Arras with III archoways on scheting a doke in the water with a crossbowe. Item j clothe of Arras with a gentlewoman harping by j castle in the midst of the clothe." There are a great many more in the inventory from which this is taken, but these will serve as specimens of the woven decorations from the walls of Caistor Castle in the middle of the sixteenth century. One of the finest pieces of tapestry left, by the way, you will find under

the minstrels' gallery in the Great Hall at Hampton Court, somewhat in the dark ; it is in good preservation, and the colour is very beautiful ; the drawing is both refined and vigorous, much resembling in style the piece preserved at Berne which is said to have been designed by Roger van der Weyden. Of about the same period (say 1460) is a piece at South Kensington Museum of the three Fates standing on a prostrate lady. This beautiful piece is a representative of a particularly pleasing kind of decoration, where figures are introduced on a background of conventional flowers ; the finest specimen of this, to my knowledge, is in one of the smaller rooms at the Hôtel de Cluny at Paris, but unluckily the guardians of that fine museum have nearly hidden it with heavy pieces of furniture. I think we must consider this kind of work as belonging in spirit to the fourteenth century, though it lasted right into the sixteenth.

Well, tapestry went on getting more and more elaborate, and reached its turning point about the first years of the sixteenth century, of which period the South Kensington Museum has now, I am happy to say, some very noble specimens, equal in fact to any of the time. The tapestry of this period, however, though so much more like a picture than that of the earlier period as to be crowded with figures, and to deal freely with all explanatory accessories, houses, chariots, landscapes, and so on, nevertheless is carefully designed on the principles proper to the art. The figures are arranged in planes close up to one another, and the cloth is pretty much filled with them, a manner which gives a peculiar richness to the designs of this period. The opposing fault to this is the arrangement of figures and landscape as in a picture proper, with foreground, middle-distance, and

distance; which plan of arrangement, in a woven hanging in which the peculiar qualities of a picture must be lacking, gives a poor unfilled-up look at a far greater expense of labour and ingenuity than went to the production of the more conventional arrangement.

We have now come to the end of the Gothic period of this noble art of picture-weaving. The middle of the sixteenth century saw the above-mentioned change take place, and thenceforward the faults, which accompanied the degradation of all the arts from that time onward, had their influence on tapestry, which, however, died hard, so to say. Up to the first quarter of the seventeenth century tapestries were still made, which, though they had lost all the romance and direct beauty of the Gothic period, had some claims to be considered decorative objects. The following period saw the execution of works at an enormous expense which were a very bad substitute for the yellow wash of a stable. Up to this time the execution at least of these pictured cloths had been pure and reasonable, had not attempted in any way to imitate the execution of the brush. But from the times of the Grand Monarque and the establishment of that hatching-nest of stupidity, the Gobelins, all that was changed, and tapestry was now no longer a fine art, but an upholsterer's toy.

We will leave it in that mud of degradation to have a few words with its congener, carpet-weaving. Now as tapestry was entirely a western art, so is carpet-weaving altogether an eastern one. 'Tis clearly an art of the peoples who dwell in tents or tent-like houses; of dusky rooms with no furniture save a few beautiful pots and a gleaming brass dish or so; of dry countries where mud is a rare treasure reserved for the sides of wells or tanks,

and where people kick off their slippers and walk barefoot when they come into a house.

I think it is a doubtful point as to whether carpets proper were made in Europe before the seventeenth century; although some learned men think that the *tapis-series sarracenoises* mentioned in the edicts of Louis the Ninth's time were true piled carpet-work, and it must be said that their reasoning seems rather convincing. Anyhow, there is no direct evidence of carpet-making in mediæval Europe, where, as a matter of course, foot carpets would be little used in the rough and very out-of-door life then led; but from the middle of the fifteenth century there is abundant evidence of the importation of eastern carpets into Europe, the most direct and satisfactory of which is given us by the pictures of the period, in which such goods are often figured; these show us carpets, doubtless made in Asia Minor, of geometrical designs always, the prototypes of which were obviously floor-mosaics; both the Flemish painters and the Italian paint these things with much accuracy and enjoyment. But besides these carpets there was undoubtedly another kind of design being carried out at the time, whose headquarters was Ispahan in Persia: this kind of design was elaborate, flowing, and founded on floral forms, very commonly mingled with animals and sometimes with human figures; in short, the geometrically designed carpets above mentioned have a direct analogy with the earlier Byzantine silk stuffs as to design, and this flowing Persian style with the freer designs which were woven in the looms of Palermo. Of these latter flowered carpets I do not pretend to fix the dates with any accuracy, but among the specimens I have seen, I will undertake to say that there are representatives of at least three

different styles before the degradation of the art; the first being a pure, flowing style, following closely in detail the forms of the finest oriental architectural work, for instance, the plaster ornament at Cairo; the next affecting much the same detail, but blended with animal forms; the third purely floral, flowing, and very fantastic and ingenious in the construction of its patterns. This last I think brings us in date to about the time of Shah Abbas (the upholder of the greatness of the restored Persian monarchy about the time of our Queen Elizabeth) and his immediate successors, that is, from 1550 to 1650 or so. After that the degradation began, but it took a very different form, as always is the case with eastern art, from what it would have done in Europe, where all degradation of art veils itself in the semblance of an intellectual advance; in the East, on the contrary, haste, clumsiness, rudeness, and the destruction of any intellectual qualities are the signs of degradation; a tendency in fact to mere disintegration. As to this special degradation of the carpet-making art, the thing to note about it is that it has as its subject-matter all the different styles I have mentioned; the Byzantine or floor-mosaic style, the flowing fourteenth-century, the scroll and beasts style, and the floral style. From the *disjecta membra* of these four are knocked up, so to say, the traditional designs which are found in comparatively modern eastern carpets, which in spite of all degradation are still generally very beautiful things, not altogether lacking in some sense of logical congruity, and generally good in colour.

It would be an endless task to follow all the ramifications of this art in the East; but I must just say that the Mussulman conquerors of India carried it to that

peninsula, where it took root and flourished till quite our own days, chiefly using the more floral side of Persian design, but in some places curiously blending with it forms taken from the native art, Buddhist and Brahminical, and in others infected by the eccentric art of modern China. Modern commercialism has laid its poisonous touch upon this useful industry since the days when I was a young man, and to-day it is almost ruined as an art; those importers who have any taste having to exercise great pains and patience in getting fair specimens of it for sale at home.

I have now gone briefly through the tale of woven ornament, but before I say a few words on what may be called the artistic ethics of this art, I must very hurriedly speak to you of the art of dyeing, since upon that is founded all the ornamental character of textile fabrics. In doing so I will for convenience' sake use the present tense, but must ask you to translate it into the past, as this art most of all among the subsidiary ones has been turned into a trade, even to the extent that the public is beginning to be conscious of its loss in this respect, though it is quite helpless to remedy it; also I must ask you to remember that I am speaking as a dyer and not a scientific person.

Blue, red, yellow, and brown are the necessary colours from which a dyer makes all his shades, however numerous; all these colours are furnished by natural substances, which have, however, to be modified by the dyer's, or, if you will, chemist's ingenuity. Of blues there is only one real dye, indigo, to wit; this dye in the ancient classical and the European mediæval countries was obtained from woad, the Germanic name for an indigoferous plant, which can be grown in rich soils

as far north at least as Lincolnshire; whereas the true indigo can only be grown in tropical or sub-tropical countries. Indigo, as long as it keeps its colour and nature, is insoluble and therefore unfit for dyeing; it has therefore to be turned into white indigo by means of deoxidation, which is effected (I must be brief and not exhaustive here) chiefly by fermentation; the white indigo is then soluble by alkalies. This deoxidation is called by the dyers "setting the blue vat"; and this setting by means of fermentation, the oldest and best way, is a very ticklish job, and the capacity of doing so indicates the past master in dyeing.

The next colour in importance is red; two kinds of substances produce it. First the powdered root of plants, called in the Germanic tongues madder; of the madder-producing plants there are several kinds, for instance, clavers or goose grass, galium verum (Our Lady's bed-straw) and wood-ruff, but they are all poor in dyeing matter, the true madder having to be carefully cultivated in good soil. Secondly, there are the insect reds; kermes or coccus, the scarlet of the ancients, which lives, or grows rather, on a prickly oak on the Mediterranean shores; the lac insect, chiefly in India, and cochineal in Mexico and South America. Of these, madder dyes a dullish blood-red; kermes, a central red tending towards scarlet; lac, a coarse, violent scarlet; and cochineal (used variously), crimson and scarlet.

Next comes yellow, which is vegetable again, and again of two kinds; one bright yellow from lemon upwards, the other brown yellow; weld is the representative of the first; the others are extracted from wood barks chiefly, and are all more or less astringent. Now these reds and yellows are dyes of a very different quality

from indigo; the textile fibres have little or no affinity for them, and have before they are dyed with them to be impregnated with mineral[1] substances for which the dyes have an affinity; these are principally alumina and tin. So used we call these metals mordants; the widest spread and most ancient mordant is the alum of commerce. The fibres being steeped or boiled in these mordants, the dyeing forms a lake on the surface of the fibre, and the trick is done. The browns are, firstly, vegetable astringents; the extract of walnut root or walnut hulls is the representative of that: and secondly, mineral, from the solution of iron, the oxide of which, that is to say yellow ochre, can be formed on fibre, and is especially useful in cotton and linen dyeing as a brownish, yellow, or buff dye. The other colours are made by mixtures of those above; green, for instance, is first dyed in the blue vat, then mordanted and dyed yellow; purple, blue vat again, mordanted and dyed red; black, blue vat, mordant and red, mordant and yellow, or blue vat and brown. The blue vat has to be continually in use for obtaining all kinds of sub-shades.

One famous and historical dye has been extinct for hundreds of years, the ancient purple, the use of which seems to have died out in the earliest Middle Ages; it was extracted from certain shell-fish, and was a very permanent and beautiful dye, varying in shade from violet to a fine, solid, and somewhat sombre red-purple.

You must be more careful to distinguish this dye from the other famous ancient one than some of the poets have been. This is the Al-kermes or coccus above mentioned, which produces with an ordinary aluminous

[1] Or sometimes, as in cochineal scarlet dyeing, the mordant is mixed with the dip bath.

mordant a central red, true vermilion, and with a good dose of acid a full scarlet, which is the scarlet of the Middle Ages, and was used till about the year 1656, when a Dutch chemist discovered the secret of getting a scarlet from cochineal by the use of tin, and so produced a cheaper, brighter, and uglier scarlet, much to the satisfaction of the civilised world; which has, for the last three hundred years, always greeted with enthusiasm every invention which tends to make its clothes and dwellings uglier and more inconvenient. I regret that I have but a short space to say a very few words about the last textile which I mentioned to you, dye-painted or printed cloth, to wit, and about which I could hardly say anything till I had given the foregoing short account of dyeing, with which art it is intimately connected. I have mentioned the fact that Pliny makes it clear to us that this art was known to the ancient Egyptians; but it most probably had its origin in India, a country of all others fittest for following the art on account of its peculiar climate and its wealth of dyeing materials; whether or not the art was practised in mediæval Europe in any form is doubtful, but it does appear at least possible that some of the "stained cloths" which we have oftenest supposed to be merely pigment painting in distemper were dye-painted. In the middle of the sixteenth century the art was firmly established in Persia, whose elegant and beautiful pattern-designing from that time forth has made certain forms of ornament quite familiar to us in the chintzes that were freely imported into England from the end of the seventeenth century onward; for it goes almost without saying that this Persian ornament conquered everything of cotton printing in India, except the cloths which were made for special

purposes, figured with the personages and scenes of the Brahmin mythology. It is hardly worth while as an artist going into the history of this art in Europe; since whatever was really fine in it was little more than a literal copy of Indian or Persian originals; of which latter one may say that the peculiarities of the manufacture gave opportunities for special freedom of design and very beautiful colour, founded on the two most important dyeing drugs, madder and indigo.

I did not mean from the first to include the pleasing art of embroidery in this discourse on textiles; so here we will end our sketch, and will conclude with very lightly considering the artistic ethics of the subject, as I promised. Don't be alarmed, it is but a word or two as to the general quality of the design of textiles in good periods. You will find that whatever merit there may be in textile ornament flows always from an instinct for the fit use of material amongst men of simple and manly lives; which instinct is so strong in pure times of art, that its effects are most obvious to us when the designer, who in those days was also the weaver, was thinking least of his materials, when he was wrapped up in the invention of his design and the beauty of its hues; it was in second-rate times of design, such as in that period of splendid Florentine velvet-weaving I have told you of, that the material was as much thought of as the design, or it may be more so; when in fact the design was used for the display of splendour of material.

In the times of the degradation of the art, with the history of which I have not thought it worth while to trouble you, people by exaggerating this fault fell into another which seems at first sight almost the opposite one; they gradually forgot that the material had any-

thing to do with the design at all, in fact they often spent time and pains to make, for instance, woven silk look like printed paper and so forth. Moreover in the fine time of art what the designer thought of was always in some way to appeal to the imagination; in other words, to tell some story, however imperfectly; he had not time, therefore, for the petty ingenuities of the later days, he was determined to let us know what he had in his mind, and he, unconsciously maybe, well understood that he was to use fair colour and beautiful form in the simplest and most direct way in order to carry out his purpose. So treated, the design of even a scrap of cloth becomes elevated by human intelligence, and has in its humble way distinct intellectual value; it becomes a thing which no intelligent unprejudiced man has any right to pass by with contempt, as a piece of mere frivolity; and I must say point blank, that unless we can elevate our design into this region of fancy and imagination, we were better to have no ornament at all; for to my mind as a mere commercial necessity, a bit of trade finish, it is unspeakably contemptible. You may easily imagine that I have not time to give you any hints as to the way of elevating our ornament on wares, nor perhaps would this be quite the best place in which to treat the subject, which it seems to me if properly treated would lead us into very serious matters indeed.

One hint, however, I should like to give you; I am myself an ornamentalist, a maker of would-be pretty things. Yet I will not try to press on you the fact that there is nothing like leather; rather, I would say, be cautious of over-ornamenting your houses and your lives with cheap unenduring prettiness; have as few things as you can, for you may be sure that simplicity is the founda-

tion of all worthy art; be sure that whatever ornament you have is proper and reasonable for the sort of life you want to lead, and don't be led by the nose by fashion into having things you don't want. In looking forward towards any utopia of the arts, I do not conceive to myself of there being a very great quantity of art of any kind, certainly not of ornament, apart from the purely intellectual arts; and even those must not swallow up too much of life. As to ornamental art (so called), I can, under our present conditions, looking forward from out of the farrago of rubbish with which we are now surrounded, chiefly see possible negative virtues in the externals of our household goods; can see them never shabby, pretentious, or ungenerous, natural and reasonable always; beautiful also, but more because they are natural and reasonable, than because we have set about to make them beautiful. We need not think that this will be an easy matter to bring about, but when it is brought about, I do believe that some sort of genuine art and ornament will accompany it, it may be in rather a Spartan way at first; from that time onward we shall have art enough, and shall have become so decent and reasonable, that every household will have become a quiet, daily, unadvertised Health Exhibition.

VI

ART UNDER PLUTOCRACY

A LECTURE DELIVERED AT UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, OXFORD, 14TH NOVEMBER 1883. JOHN RUSKIN IN THE CHAIR

You may well think I am not here to criticise any special school of art or artists, or to plead for any special style, or to give you any instructions, however general, as to the practice of the arts. Rather I want to take counsel with you as to what hindrances may lie in the way towards making art what it should be, a help and solace to the daily life of all men. Some of you here may think that the hindrances in the way are none, or few, and easy to be swept aside. You will say that there is on many sides much knowledge of the history of art, and plenty of taste for it, at least among the cultivated classes; that many men of talent, and some few of genius, practise it with no mean success; that within the last fifty years there has been something almost like a fresh renaissance of art, even in directions where such a change was least to be hoped for. All this is true as far as it goes; and I can well understand this state of things being a cause of gratulation amongst those who do not know what the scope of art really is, and how closely it is bound up with the general condition of society, and especially with the lives of those who live by manual labour and whom we call the working classes. For my part, I cannot help

noting that under the apparent satisfaction with the progress of art of late years there lies in the minds of most thinking people a feeling of mere despair as to the prospects of art in the future; a despair which seems to me fully justified if we look at the present condition of art without considering the causes which have led to it, or the hopes which may exist for a change in those causes. For, without beating about the bush, let us consider what the real state of art is. And first I must ask you to extend the word art beyond those matters which are consciously works of art, to take in not only painting and sculpture, and architecture, but the shapes and colours of all household goods, nay, even the arrangement of the fields for tillage and pasture, the management of towns and of our highways of all kinds; in a word, to extend it to the aspect of all the externals of our life. For I must ask you to believe that every one of the things that goes to make up the surroundings among which we live must be either beautiful or ugly, either elevating or degrading to us, either a torment and burden to the maker of it to make, or a pleasure and a solace to him. How does it fare therefore with our external surroundings in these days? What kind of an account shall we be able to give to those who come after us of our dealings with the earth, which our forefathers handed down to us still beautiful, in spite of all the thousands of years of strife and carelessness and selfishness?

Surely this is no light question to ask ourselves; nor am I afraid that you will think it a mere rhetorical flourish if I say that it is a question that may well seem a solemn one when it is asked here in Oxford, amidst sights and memories which we older men at least regard with nothing short of love. He must be indeed a man

of narrow incomplete mind who, amidst the buildings raised by the hope of our forefathers, amidst the country which they made so lovely, would venture to say that the beauty of the earth was a matter of little moment. And yet, I say, how have we of these latter days treated the beauty of the earth, or that which we call art?

Perhaps I had best begin by stating what will scarcely be new to you, that art must be broadly divided into two kinds, of which we may call the first Intellectual, and the second Decorative Art, using the words as mere forms of convenience. The first kind addresses itself wholly to our mental needs; the things made by it serve no other purpose but to feed the mind, and, as far as material needs go, might be done without altogether. The second, though so much of it as is art does also appeal to the mind, is always but a part of things which are intended primarily for the service of the body. I must further say that there have been nations and periods which lacked the purely Intellectual art but positively none which lacked the Decorative (or at least some pretence of it); and furthermore, that in all times when the arts were in a healthy condition there was an intimate connexion between the two kinds of art; a connexion so close, that in the times when art flourished most, the higher and lower kinds were divided by no hard and fast lines. The highest intellectual art was meant to please the eye, as the phrase goes, as well as to excite the emotions and train the intellect. It appealed to all men, and to all the faculties of a man. On the other hand, the humblest of the ornamental art shared in the meaning and emotion of the intellectual; one melted into the other by scarce perceptible gradations; in short, the best artist was a workman still, the humblest workman was an artist. That is not the case

now, nor has been for two or three centuries in civilised countries. Intellectual art is separated from Decorative by the sharpest lines of demarcation, not only as to the kind of work produced under those names, but even in the social position of the producers; those who follow the Intellectual arts being all professional men or gentlemen by virtue of their calling, while those who follow the Decorative are workmen earning weekly wages, non-gentlemen in short.

Now, as I have already said, many men of talent and some few of genius are engaged at present in producing works of Intellectual art, paintings and sculpture chiefly. It is nowise my business here or elsewhere to criticise their works; but my subject compels me to say that those who follow the Intellectual arts must be divided into two sections, the first composed of men who would in any age of the world have held a high place in their craft; the second of men who hold their position of gentleman-artist either by the accident of their birth, or by their possessing industry, business habits, or such-like qualities, out of all proportion to their artistic gifts. The work which these latter produce seems to me of little value to the world, though there is a thriving market for it, and their position is neither dignified nor wholesome; yet they are mostly not to be blamed for it personally, since often they have gifts for art, though not great ones, and would probably not have succeeded in any other career. They are, in fact, good decorative workmen spoiled by a system which compels them to ambitious individualist effort, by cutting off from them any opportunity for co-operation with others of greater or less capacity for the production of popular art.

As to the first section of artists, who worthily fill

their places and make the world wealthier by their work, it must be said of them that they are very few. These men have won their mastery over their craft by dint of incredible toil, pains, and anxiety, by qualities of mind and strength of will which are bound to produce something of value. Nevertheless they are injured also by the system which insists on individualism and forbids co-operation. For first, they are cut off from tradition, that wonderful, almost miraculous accumulation of the skill of ages, which men find themselves partakers in without effort on their part. The knowledge of the past and the sympathy with it which the artists of to-day have, they have acquired, on the contrary, by their own most strenuous individual effort; and as that tradition no longer exists to help them in their practice of the art, and they are heavily weighted in the race by having to learn everything from the beginning, each man for himself, so also, and that is worse, the lack of it deprives them o a sympathetic and appreciative audience. Apart from the artists themselves and a few persons who would be also artists but for want of opportunity and for insufficient gifts of hand and eye, there is in the public of to-day no real knowledge of art, and little love for it. Nothing, save at the best certain vague prepossessions, which are but the phantom of that tradition which once bound artist and public together. Therefore the artists are obliged to express themselves, as it were, in a language not understanded of the people. Nor is this their fault. If they were to try, as some think they should, to meet the public half-way and work in such a manner as to satisfy at any cost those vague prepossessions of men ignorant of art, they would be casting aside their special gifts, they would be traitors to the

cause of art, which it is their duty and glory to serve. They have no choice save to do their own personal individual work unhelped by the present, stimulated by the past, but shamed by it, and even in a way hampered by it; they must stand apart as possessors of some sacred mystery which, whatever happens, they must at least do their best to guard. It is not to be doubted that both their own lives and their works are injured by this isolation. But the loss of the people; how are we to measure that? That they should have great men living and working amongst them, and be ignorant of the very existence of their work, and incapable of knowing what it means if they could see it!

In the times when art was abundant and healthy, all men were more or less artists; that is to say, the instinct for beauty which is inborn in every complete man had such force that the whole body of craftsmen habitually and without conscious effort made beautiful things, and the audience for the authors of intellectual art was nothing short of the whole people. And so they had each an assured hope of gaining that genuine praise and sympathy which all men who exercise their imagination in expression most certainly and naturally crave, and the lack of which does certainly injure them in some way; makes them shy, over-sensitive, and narrow, or else cynical and mocking, and in that case well-nigh useless. But in these days, I have said and repeat, the whole people is careless and ignorant of art; the inborn instinct for beauty is checked and thwarted at every turn; and the result on the less intellectual or decorative art is that as a spontaneous and popular expression of the instinct for beauty it does not exist at all. It is a matter of course that everything made by man's hand is now obviously

ugly, unless it is made beautiful by conscious effort; nor does it mend the matter that men have not lost the habit deduced from the times of art, of professing to ornament household goods and the like; for this sham ornament, which has no least intention of giving any one pleasure, is so base and foolish that the words upholstery and upholsterer have come to have a kind of secondary meaning indicative of the profound contempt which all sensible men have for such twaddle.

This, so far, is what decorative art has come to, and I must break off a while here and ask you to consider what it once was, lest you think over hastily that its degradation is a matter of little moment. Think, I beg you, to go no further back in history, of the stately and careful beauty of S. Sophia at Constantinople, of the golden twilight of S. Mark's at Venice; of the sculptured cliffs of the great French cathedrals, of the quaint and familiar beauty of our own minsters; nay, go through Oxford streets and ponder on what is left us there unscathed by the fury of the thriving shop and the progressive college; or wander some day through some of the out-of-the-way villages and little towns that lie scattered about the country-side within twenty miles of Oxford; and you will surely see that the loss of decorative art is a grievous loss to the world.

Thus then in considering the state of art among us I have been driven to the conclusion that in its co-operative form it is extinct, and only exists in the conscious efforts of men of genius and talent, who themselves are injured, and thwarted, and deprived of due sympathy by the lack of co-operative art.

But furthermore, the repression of the instinct for beauty which has destroyed the Decorative and injured

the Intellectual arts has not stopped there in the injury it has done us. I can myself sympathise with a feeling which I suppose is still not rare, a craving to escape sometimes to mere Nature, not only from ugliness and squalor, not only from a condition of superabundance of art, but even from a condition of art severe and well ordered, even, say, from such surroundings as the lovely simplicity of Periclean Athens. I can deeply sympathise with a weary man finding his account in interest in mere life and communion with external nature, the face of the country, the wind and weather, and the course of the day, and the lives of animals, wild and domestic; and man's daily dealings with all this for his daily bread, and rest, and innocent beast-like pleasure. But the interest in the mere animal life of man has become impossible to be indulged in in its fulness by most civilised people. Yet civilisation, it seems to me, owes us some compensation for the loss of this romance, which now only hangs like a dream about the country life of busy lands. To keep the air pure and the rivers clean, to take some pains to keep the meadows and tillage as pleasant as reasonable use will allow them to be; to allow peaceable citizens freedom to wander where they will, so they do no hurt to garden or cornfield; nay, even to leave here and there some piece of waste or mountain sacredly free from fence or tillage as a memory of man's ruder struggles with nature in his earlier days: is it too much to ask civilisation to be so far thoughtful of man's pleasure and rest, and to help so far as this her children to whom she has most often set such heavy tasks of grinding labour? Surely not an unreasonable asking. But not a whit of it shall we get under the present system of society. That loss of the instinct for

beauty which has involved us in the loss of popular art is also busy in depriving us of the only compensation possible for that loss, by surely and not slowly destroying the beauty of the very face of the earth. Not only are London and our other great commercial cities mere masses of sordidness, filth, and squalor, embroidered with patches of pompous and vulgar hideousness, no less revolting to the eye and the mind when one knows what it means: not only have whole counties of England, and the heavens that hang over them, disappeared beneath a crust of unutterable grime, but the disease, which, to a visitor coming from the times of art, reason, and order, would seem to be a love of dirt and ugliness for its own sake, spreads all over the country, and every little market town seizes the opportunity to imitate, as far as it can, the majesty of the hell of London and Manchester. Need I speak to you of the wretched suburbs that sprawl all round our fairest and most ancient cities? Must I speak to you of the degradation that has so speedily befallen this city, still the most beautiful of them all; a city which, with its surroundings, would, if we had had a grain of common sense, have been treated like a most precious jewel, whose beauty was to be preserved at any cost? I say at any cost, for it was a possession which did not belong to us, but which we were trustees of for all posterity. I am old enough to know how we have treated that jewel; as if it were any common stone kicking about on the highway, good enough to throw at a dog. When I remember the contrast between the Oxford of to-day and the Oxford which I first saw thirty years ago, I wonder I can face the misery (there is no other word for it) of visiting it, even to have the honour of addressing you to-night. But further-

more, not only are the cities a disgrace to us, and the smaller towns a laughing-stock; not only are the dwellings of man grown inexpressibly base and ugly, but the very cowsheds and cart-stables, nay, the merest piece of necessary farm engineering, are tarred with the same brush. Even if a tree is cut down or blown down, a worse one, if any, is planted in its stead, and, in short, our civilisation is passing like a blight, daily growing heavier and more poisonous, over the whole face of the country, so that every change is sure to be a change for the worse in its outward aspect. So then it comes to this, that not only are the minds of great artists narrowed and their sympathies frozen by their isolation, not only has co-operative art come to a standstill, but the very food on which both the greater and the lesser art subsists is being destroyed; the well of art is poisoned at its spring.

Now I do not wonder that those who think that these evils are from henceforth for ever necessary to the progress of civilisation should try to make the best of things, should shut their eyes to all they can, and praise the galvanised life of the art of the present day; but, for my part, I believe that they are not necessary to civilisation, but only accompaniments to one phase of it, which will change and pass into something else, like all prior phases have done. I believe also that the essential characteristic of the present state of society is that which has so ruined art, or the pleasure of life; and that this having died out, the inborn love of man for beauty and the desire for expressing it will no longer be repressed, and art will be free. At the same time I not only admit, but declare, and think it most important to declare, that so long as the system of competition in the pro-

duction and exchange of the means of life goes on, the degradation of the arts will go on; and if that system is to last for ever, then art is doomed, and will surely die; that is to say, civilisation will die. I know it is at present the received opinion that the competitive, or "Devil take the hindmost" system is the last system of economy which the world will see; that it is perfection, and therefore finality has been reached in it; and it is doubtless a bold thing to fly in the face of this opinion, which I am told is held even by the most learned men. But though I am not learned, I have been taught that the patriarchal system died out into that of the citizen and chattel slave, which in its turn gave place to that of the feudal lord and the serf, which, passing through a modified form, in which the burgher, the guild-craftsman, and his journeyman played their parts, was supplanted by the system of so-called free contract now existing. That all things since the beginning of the world have been tending to the development of this system I willingly admit, since it exists; that all the events of history have taken place for the purpose of making it eternal, the very evolution of those events forbids me to believe.

For I am "one of the people called Socialists"; therefore I am certain that evolution in the economical conditions of life will go on, whatever shadowy barriers may be drawn across its path by men whose apparent self-interest binds them, consciously or unconsciously, to the present, and who are therefore hopeless for the future. I hold that the condition of competition between man and man is bestial only, and that of association human; I think that the change from the undeveloped competition of the Middle Ages, trammelled as it was

by the personal relations of feudality, and the attempts at association of the guild-craftsmen into the full-blown *laissez-faire* competition of the nineteenth century is bringing to birth out of its own anarchy, and by the very means by which it seeks to perpetuate that anarchy, a spirit of association founded on that antagonism which has produced all former changes in the condition of men, and which will one day abolish all classes and take definite and practical form, and substitute association for competition in all that relates to the production and exchange of the means of life. I further believe that as that change will be beneficent in many ways, so especially will it give an opportunity for the new birth of art, which is now being crushed to death by the money-bags of competitive commerce.

My reason for this hope for art is founded on what I feel quite sure is a truth, and an important one, namely that all art, even the highest, is influenced by the conditions of labour of the mass of mankind, and that any pretensions which may be made for even the highest intellectual art to be independent of these general conditions are futile and vain; that is to say, that any art which professes to be founded on the special education or refinement of a limited body or class must of necessity be unreal and short-lived. ART IS MAN'S EXPRESSION OF HIS JOY IN LABOUR. If those are not Professor Ruskin's words they embody at least his teaching on this subject. Nor has any truth more important ever been stated; for if pleasure in labour be generally possible, what a strange folly it must be for men to consent to labour without pleasure; and what a hideous injustice it must be for society to compel most men to labour without pleasure! For since all men not

dishonest must labour, it becomes a question either of forcing them to lead unhappy lives or allowing them to live unhappily. Now the chief accusation I have to bring against the modern state of society is that it is founded on the art-lacking or unhappy labour of the greater part of men; and all that external degradation of the face of the country of which I have spoken is hateful to me not only because it is a cause of unhappiness to some few of us who still love art, but also and chiefly because it is a token of the unhappy life forced on the great mass of the population by the system of competitive commerce.

The pleasure which ought to go with the making of every piece of handicraft has for its basis the keen interest which every healthy man takes in healthy life, and is compounded, it seems to me, chiefly of three elements; variety, hope of creation, and the self-respect which comes of a sense of usefulness; to which must be added that mysterious bodily pleasure which goes with the deft exercise of the bodily powers. I do not think I need spend many words in trying to prove that these things, if they really and fully accompanied labour, would do much to make it pleasant. As to the pleasures of variety, any of you who have ever made anything, I don't care what, will well remember the pleasure that went with the turning out of the first specimen. What would have become of that pleasure if you had been compelled to go on making it exactly the same for ever? As to the hope of creation, the hope of producing some worthy or even excellent work which without you, the craftsman, would not have existed at all, a thing which needs you and can have no substitute for you in the making of it; can we any of us fail to understand

the pleasure of this? No less easy, surely, is it to see how much the self-respect born of the consciousness of usefulness must sweeten labour. To feel that you have to do a thing not to satisfy the whim of a fool or a set of fools, but because it is really good in itself, that is useful, would surely be a good help to getting through the day's work. As to the unreasoning, sensuous pleasure in handiwork, I believe in good sooth that it has more power of getting rough and strenuous work out of men, even as things go, than most people imagine. At any rate it lies at the bottom of the production of all art, which cannot exist without it even in its feeblest and rudest form.

Now this compound pleasure in handiwork I claim as the birthright of all workmen. I say that if they lack any part of it they will be so far degraded, but that if they lack it altogether they are, so far as their work goes, I will not say slaves, the word would not be strong enough, but machines more or less conscious of their own unhappiness.

I have appealed already to history in aid of my hopes for a change in the system of the conditions of labour. I wish to bring forward now the witness of history that this claim of labour for pleasure rests on a foundation stronger than a mere fantastic dream; what is left of the art of all kinds produced in all periods and countries where hope of progress was alive before the development of the commercial system shows plainly enough to those who have eyes and understanding that pleasure did always in some degree accompany its production. This fact, however difficult it may be to demonstrate in a pedantic way, is abundantly admitted by those who have studied the arts widely; the very phrases so common in criticism

that such and such a piece of would-be art is done mechanically, or done without feeling, express accurately enough the general sense of artists of a standard deduced from times of healthy art; for this mechanical and feelingless handiwork did not exist till days comparatively near our own, and it is the condition of labour under plutocratic rule which has allowed it any place at all.

The craftsman of the Middle Ages no doubt often suffered grievous material oppression, yet in spite of the rigid line of separation drawn by the hierarchical system under which he lived between him and his feudal superior, the difference between them was arbitrary rather than real; there was no such gulf in language, manners, and ideas as divides a cultivated middle-class person of to-day, a "gentleman," from even a respectable lower-class man; the mental qualities necessary to an artist, intelligence, fancy, imagination, had not then to go through the mill of the competitive market, nor had the rich (or successful competitors) made good their claim to be the sole possessors of mental refinement.

As to the conditions of handiwork in those days, the crafts were drawn together into guilds which indeed divided the occupations of men rigidly enough, and guarded the door to those occupations jealously; but as outside among the guilds there was little competition in the markets, wares being made in the first instance for domestic consumption, and only the overplus of what was wanted at home close to the place of production ever coming into the market or requiring any one to come and go between the producer and consumer, so inside the guilds there was but little division of labour; a man or youth once accepted as an apprentice to a craft learned it from end to end, and became as a matter of course the

master of it; and in the earlier days of the guilds, when the masters were scarcely even small capitalists, there was no grade in the craft save this temporary one. Later on, when the masters became capitalists in a sort, and the apprentices were, like the masters, privileged, the class of journeymen craftsmen came into existence; but it does not seem that the difference between them and the aristocracy of the guild was anything more than an arbitrary one. In short, during all this period the unit of labour was an intelligent man. Under this system of handiwork no great pressure of speed was put on a man's work, but he was allowed to carry it through leisurely and thoughtfully; it used the whole of a man for the production of a piece of goods, and not small portions of many men; it developed the workman's whole intelligence according to his capacity, instead of concentrating his energy on one-sided dealing with a trifling piece of work; in short, it did not submit the hand and soul of the workman to the necessities of the competitive market, but allowed them freedom for due human development. It was this system, which had not learned the lesson that man was made for commerce, but supposed in its simplicity that commerce was made for man, which produced the art of the Middle Ages, wherein the harmonious co-operation of free intelligence was carried to the furthest point which has yet been attained, and which alone of all art can claim to be called Free. The effect of this freedom, and the widespread or rather universal sense of beauty to which it gave birth, became obvious enough in the outburst of the expression of splendid and copious genius which marks the Italian Renaissance. Nor can it be doubted that this glorious art was the fruit of the five centuries of free popular art which preceded it, and not

of the rise of commercialism which was contemporaneous with it; for the glory of the Renaissance faded out with strange rapidity as commercial competition developed, so that about the end of the seventeenth century, both in the intellectual and the decorative arts, the commonplace or body still existed, but the romance or soul of them was gone. Step by step they had faded and sickened before the advance of commercialism, now speedily gathering force throughout civilisation. The domestic or architectural arts were becoming (or become) mere toys for the competitive market through which all material wares used by civilised men now had to pass. Commercialism had by this time well-nigh destroyed the craft system of labour, in which, as aforesaid, the unit of labour is a fully instructed craftsman, and had supplanted it by what I will ask leave to call the workshop system, wherein, when complete, division of labour in handiwork is carried to the highest point possible, and the unit of manufacture is no longer a man, but a group of men, each member of which is dependent on his fellows, and is utterly useless by himself. This system of the workshop division of labour was perfected during the eighteenth century by the efforts of the manufacturing classes, stimulated by the demands of the ever-widening markets; it is still the system in some of the smaller and more domestic kinds of manufacture, holding much the same place amongst us as the remains of the craft-system did in the days when that of the workshop was still young. Under this system, as I have said, all the romance of the arts died out, but the commonplace of them flourished still; for the idea that the essential aim of manufacture is the making of goods still struggled with a newer idea which has since obtained complete victory, namely, that

it is carried on for the sake of making a profit for the manufacturer on the one hand, and on the other for the employment of the working classes.

This idea of commerce being an end in itself and not a means merely, being but half developed in the eighteenth century, the special period of the workshop system, some interest could still be taken in those days in the making of wares. The capitalist manufacturer of the period had some pride in turning out goods which would do him credit, as the phrase went; he was not willing wholly to sacrifice his pleasure in this kind to the imperious demands of commerce; even his workman, though no longer an artist, that is a free workman, was bound to have skill in his craft, limited though it was to the small fragment of it which he had to toil at day by day for his whole life.

But commerce went on growing, stimulated still more by the opening up of new markets, and pushed on the invention of men, till their ingenuity produced the machines which we have now got to look upon as necessities of manufacture, and which have brought about a system the very opposite to the ancient craft-system; that system was fixed and conservative of methods; there was no real difference in the method of making a piece of goods between the time of Pliny and the time of Sir Thomas More; the method of manufacture, on the contrary, in the present time, alters not merely from decade to decade, but from year to year; this fact has naturally helped the victory of this machine system, the system of the Factory, where the machine-like workmen of the workshop period are supplanted by actual machines, of which the operatives (as they are now called) are but a portion, and a portion gradually diminishing

both in importance and numbers. This system is still short of its full development, therefore to a certain extent the workshop system is being carried on side by side with it, but is being speedily and steadily crushed out by it; and when the process is complete, the skilled workman will no longer exist, and his place will be filled by machines directed by a few highly trained and very intelligent experts, and tended by a multitude of people, men, women, and children, of whom neither skill nor intelligence is required.

This system, I repeat, is as near as may be the opposite of that which produced the popular art which led up to that splendid outburst of art in the days of the Italian Renaissance which even cultivated men will sometimes deign to notice nowadays; it has therefore produced the opposite of what the old craft-system produced, the death of art and not its birth; in other words the degradation of the external surroundings of life, or simply and plainly unhappiness. Through all society spreads that curse of unhappiness; from the poor wretches, the news of whom we middle-class people are just now receiving with such naif wonder and horror; from those poor people whom nature forces to strive against hope, and to expend all the divine energy of man in competing for something less than a dog's lodging and a dog's food, from them up to the cultivated and refined person, well lodged, well fed, well clothed, expensively educated, but lacking all interest in life except, it may be, the cultivation of unhappiness as a fine art.

Something must be wrong then in art, or the happiness of life is sickening in the house of civilisation. What has caused the sickness? Machine-labour will

you say? Well, I have seen quoted a passage from one of the ancient Sicilian poets rejoicing in the fashioning of a water-mill, and exulting in labour being set free from the toil of the hand-quern in consequence; and that surely would be a type of a man's natural hope when foreseeing the invention of labour-saving machinery as 'tis called; natural surely, since though I have said that the labour of which art can form a part should be accompanied by pleasure, no one could deny that there is some necessary labour even which is not pleasant in itself, and plenty of unnecessary labour which is merely painful. If machinery had been used for minimising such labour, the utmost ingenuity would scarcely have been wasted on it; but is that the case in any way? Look round the world, and you must agree with John Stuart Mill in his doubt whether all the machinery of modern times has lightened the daily work of one labourer. And why have our natural hopes been so disappointed? Surely because in these latter days, in which as a matter of fact machinery has been invented, it was by no means invented with the aim of saving the pain of labour. The phrase labour-saving machinery is elliptical, and means machinery which saves the cost of labour, not the labour itself, which will be expended when saved on tending other machines. For a doctrine which, as I have said, began to be accepted under the workshop system, is now universally received, even though we are yet short of the complete development of the system of the Factory. Briefly, the doctrine is this, that the essential aim of manufacture is making a profit; that it is frivolous to consider whether the wares when made will be of more or less use to the world so long as any one can be found to buy them at a price

which, when the workman engaged in making them has received of necessaries and comforts as little as he can be got to take, will leave something over as a reward to the capitalist who has employed him. This doctrine of the sole aim of manufacture (or indeed of life) being the profit of the capitalist and the occupation of the workman, is held, I say, by almost every one; its corollary is, that labour is necessarily unlimited, and that to attempt to limit it is not so much foolish as wicked, whatever misery may be caused to the community by the manufacture and sale of the wares made.

It is this superstition of commerce being an end in itself, of man made for commerce, not commerce for man, of which art has sickened; not of the accidental appliances which that superstition when put in practice has brought to its aid; machines and railways and the like, which do now verily control us all, might have been controlled by us, if we had not been resolute to seek profit and occupation at the cost of establishing for a time that corrupt and degrading anarchy which has usurped the name of Society. It is my business here to-night and everywhere to foster your discontent with that anarchy and its visible results; for indeed I think it would be an insult to you to suppose that you are contented with the state of things as they are; contented to see all beauty vanish from our beautiful city, for instance; contented with the squalor of the black country, with the hideousness of London, the wen of all wens, as Cobbett called it; contented with the ugliness and baseness which everywhere surround the life of civilised man; contented, lastly, to be living above that unutterable and sickening misery of which a few details are once again reaching us as if from some distant unhappy country,

of which we could scarcely expect to hear, but which I tell you is the necessary foundation on which our society, our anarchy rests.

Neither can I doubt that every one here has formed some idea of remedies for these defects in our civilisation, as we euphemistically call them, even though the ideas be vague; also I know that you are familiar with the precepts of the system of economy, that religion, I may say, which has supplanted the precepts of the old religions on the duty and blessing of giving to the needy; you understand of course that though a friend may give to a friend and both giver and receiver be better for the gift, yet a rich man cannot give to a poor one without both being the worse for it; I suppose because they are not friends. And amidst all this I feel sure, I say, that you all of you have some ideal of a state of things better than that amidst which we live, something, I mean to say, more than the application of temporary palliatives to the enduring defects of our civilisation.

Now it seems to me that the ideal of better times which the more advanced in opinion of our own class have formed as possible and hopeful is something like this. There is to be a large class of industrious people not too much refined (or they could not do the rough work wanted of them), who are to live in comfort (not, however, meaning our middle-class comfort), and receive a kind of education (if they can), and not be overworked; that is, not overworked for a working man; his light day's work would be rather heavy for the refined classes. This class is to be the basis of society, and its existence will leave the consciences of the refined class quite free and at rest. From this refined class will come the directors or captains of labour (in other

words the usurers), the directors of people's consciences religious and literary (clergy, philosophers, newspaper-writers), and lastly, if that be thought of at all, the directors of art; these two classes with or without a third, the functions of which are indefinite, will live together with the greatest goodwill, the upper helping the lower without sense of condescension on one side or humiliation on the other; the lower are to be perfectly content with their position, and there is to be no grain of antagonism between the classes: although (even Utopianism of this kind being unable to shake off the idea of the necessity of competition between individuals) the lower class, blessed and respected as it is to be, will have moreover the additional blessing of hope held out to it; the hope of each man rising into the upper class, and leaving the chrysalis of labour behind him; nor, if that matters, is the lower class to lack due political or parliamentary power; all men (or nearly all) being equal before the ballot-box, except so far as they may be bought like other things. That seems to me to be the middle-class liberal ideal of reformed society; all the world turned bourgeois, big and little, peace under the rule of competitive commerce, ease of mind and a good conscience to all and several under the rule of the devil take the hindmost.

Well, for my part I have nothing, positively nothing to say against it if it can be brought about. Religion, morality, art, literature, science, might for all I know flourish under it and make the world a heaven. But have we not tried it somewhat already? Are not many people jubilant whenever they stand on a public platform over the speedy advent of this good time? It seems to me that the continued and advancing prospe-

rity of the working classes is almost always noted when a political man addresses an audience on general subjects, when he forgets party politics; nor seldom when he remembers them most. Nor do I wish to take away honour where honour is due; I believe there are many people who deeply believe in the realisation of this ideal, while they are not ignorant of how lamentably far things are from it at present; I know that there are men who sacrifice time, money, pleasure, their own prejudices even to bring it about; men who hate strife and love peace, men hard working, kindly, unambitious. What have they done? How much nearer are they to the ideal of the bourgeois commonwealth than they were at the time of the Reform Bill, or the time of the repeal of the Corn Laws? Well, thus much nearer to a great change perhaps, that there is a chink in the armour of self-satisfaction; a suspicion that perhaps it is not the accidents of the system of competitive commerce which have to be abolished, but the system itself; but as to approaching the ideal of that system reformed into humanity and decency, they are about so much nearer to it as a man is nearer to the moon when he stands on a hayrick. I don't want to make too much of the matter of money-wages apart from the ghastly contrast between the rich and the poor which is the essence of our system; yet remember that poverty driven below a certain limit means degradation and slavery pure and simple. Now I have seen a statement made by one of the hopeful men of the rich middle class that the average yearly income of an English working man's household is one hundred pounds. I don't believe the figures because I am sure that they are swollen by wages paid in times of inflation, and ignore the precarious position of most

working men; but quite apart from that, do not, I beg you, take refuge behind averages; for at least they are swelled by the high wages paid to special classes of workmen in special places, and in the manufacturing districts by the mothers of families working in factories, to my mind a most abominable custom, and by other matters of the like kind, which the average-makers leave you to find out for yourselves. But even that is not the point of the matter. For my part the enormous average of one hundred pounds a year to so many millions of toiling people, while many thousands who do not toil think themselves poor with ten times the income, does not comfort me for the fact of a thousand strong men waiting at the dock gates down at Poplar the greater part of a working day, on the chance of some of them being taken on at wretched wages, or for the ordinary wage of a farm labourer over a great part of England being ten shillings per week, and that considered ruinous by the farmers also: if averages will content us while such things as this go on, why stop at the working classes? Why not take in everybody, from the Duke of Westminster downwards, and then raise a hymn of rejoicing over the income of the English people?

I say let us be done with averages and look at lives and their sufferings, and try to realise them: for indeed what I want you to note is this; that though you may realise a part of the bourgeois or radical ideal, there is and for ever will be under the competitive system a skeleton in the cupboard. We may, nay, we have managed to create a great mass of middling well-to-do people, hovering on the verge of the middle classes, prosperous artisans, small tradesmen, and the like; and I must say parenthetically that in spite of all their in-

nate good qualities the class does little credit to our civilisation; for though they live in a kind of swinish comfort as far as food is concerned, they are ill housed, ill educated, crushed by grovelling superstitions, lacking reasonable pleasures, utterly devoid of any sense of beauty. But let that pass. For aught I know we may very much increase the proportionate numbers of this class without making any serious change in our system, but under all that still lies and will lie another class which we shall never get rid of as long as we are under the tyranny of the devil take the hindmost; that class is the Class of Victims. Now above all things I want us not to forget them (as indeed we are not likely to for some weeks to come), or to console ourselves by averages for the fact that the riches of the rich and the comfort of the well-to-do are founded on that terrible mass of undignified, unrewarded, useless misery, concerning which we have of late been hearing a little, a very little; after all we do know that is a fact, and we can only console ourselves by hoping that we may, if we are watchful and diligent (which we very seldom are), we may greatly diminish the amount of it. I ask you, is such a hope as that worthy of our boasted civilisation with its perfected creeds, its high morality, its sounding political maxims? Will you think it monstrous that some people have conceived another hope, and see before them the ideal of a society in which there should be no classes permanently degraded for the benefit of the commonweal? For one thing I would have you remember, that this lowest class of utter poverty lies like a gulf before the whole of the working classes, who in spite of all averages live a precarious life; the failure in the game of life which entails on a

rich man an unambitious retirement, and on a well-to-do man a life of dependence and laborious shifts, drags a working man down into that hell of irredeemable degradation. I hope there are but few, at least here, who can comfort their consciences by saying that the working classes bring this degradation on themselves by their own unthrift and recklessness. Some do, no doubt, stoic philosophers of the higher type not being much commoner among day labourers than among the well-to-do and rich; but we know very well how sorely the mass of the poor strive, practising such thrift as is in itself a degradation to man, in whose very nature it is to love mirth and pleasure, and how in spite of all that they fall into the gulf. What! are we going to deny that when we see all round us in our own class cases of men failing in life by no fault of their own; nay, many of the failers worthier and more useful than those that succeed: as might indeed be looked for in the state of war which we call the system of unlimited competition, where the best campaigning luggage a man can carry is a hard heart and no scruples? For indeed the fulfilment of that liberal ideal of the reform of our present system into a state of moderate class supremacy is impossible, because that system is after all nothing but a continuous implacable war; the war once ended, commerce, as we now understand the word, comes to an end, and the mountains of wares which are either useless in themselves or only useful to slaves and slave-owners are no longer made, and once again art will be used to determine what things are useful and what useless to be made; since nothing should be made which does not give pleasure to the maker and the user, and that pleasure of making must produce art in the hands

of the workman. So will art be used to discriminate between the waste and the usefulness of labour; whereas at present the waste of labour is, as I have said above, a matter never considered at all; so long as a man toils he is supposed to be useful, no matter what he toils at.

I tell you the very essence of competitive commerce is waste; the waste that comes of the anarchy of war. Do not be deceived by the outside appearance of order in our plutocratic society. It fares with it as it does with the older forms of war, that there is an outside look of quiet wonderful order about it; how neat and comforting the steady march of the regiment; how quiet and respectable the sergeants look; how clean the polished cannon; neat as a new pin are the storehouses of murder; the books of adjutant and sergeant as innocent-looking as may be; nay, the very orders for destruction and plunder are given with a quiet precision which seems the very token of a good conscience; this is the mask that lies before the ruined cornfield and the burning cottage, the mangled bodies, the untimely death of worthy men, the desolated home. All this, the results of the order and sobriety which is the face which civilised soldiering turns towards us stay-at-homes, we have been told often and eloquently enough to consider; often enough we have been shown the wrong side of the glories of war, nor can we be shown it too often or too eloquently. Yet I say even such a mask is worn by competitive commerce, with its respectable prim order, its talk of peace and the blessings of intercommunication of countries and the like; and all the while its whole energy, its whole organised precision is employed in one thing, the wrenching the means of living from others; while outside that everything must do as it may,

whoever is the worse or the better for it; as in the war of fire and steel, all other aims must be crushed out before that one object. It is worse than the older war in one respect at least, that whereas that was intermittent, this is continuous and unresting, and its leaders and captains are never tired of declaring that it must last as long as the world, and is the end-all and be-all of the creation of man and of his home. Of such the words are said:

> For them alone do seethe
> A thousand men in troubles wide and dark;
> Half ignorant they turn an easy wheel
> That sets sharp racks at work to pinch and peel.

What can overthrow this terrible organisation so strong in itself, so rooted in the self-interest, stupidity, and cowardice of strenuous narrow-minded men; so strong in itself and so much fortified against attack by the surrounding anarchy which it has bred? Nothing but discontent with that anarchy, and an order which in its turn will arise from it, nay, is arising from it; an order once a part of the internal organisation of that which it is doomed to destroy. For the fuller development of industrialism from the ancient crafts through the workshop system into the system of the factory and machine, while it has taken from the workmen all pleasure in their labour, or hope of distinction and excellence in it, has welded them into a great class, and has by its very oppression and compulsion of the monotony of life driven them into feeling the solidarity of their interests and the antagonism of those interests to those of the capitalist class; they are all through civilisation feeling the necessity of their rising as a class. As I have said, it is impossible for them to coalesce with the middle classes

to produce the universal reign of moderate bourgeois society which some have dreamed of; because however many of them may rise out of their class, these become at once part of the middle class, owners of capital, even though it be in a small way, and exploiters of labour; and there is still left behind a lower class which in its own turn drags down to it the unsuccessful in the struggle; a process which is being accelerated in these latter days by the rapid growth of the great factories and stores, which are extinguishing the remains of the small workshops served by men who may hope to become small masters, and also the smaller of the tradesman class. Thus then, feeling that it is impossible for them to rise as a class, while competition naturally, and as a necessity for its existence, keeps them down, they have begun to look to association as their natural tendency, just as competition is looked to by the capitalists; in them the hope has arisen, if nowhere else, of finally making an end of class degradation.

It is in the belief that this hope is spreading to the middle classes that I stand before you now, pleading for its acceptance by you, in the certainty that in its fulfilment alone lies the other hope for the new birth of art and the attainment by the middle classes of true refinement, the lack of which at present is so grievously betokened by the sordidness and baseness of all the external surroundings of our lives, even those of us who are rich. I know there are some to whom this possibility of the getting rid of class degradation may come, not as a hope, but as a fear. These may comfort themselves by thinking that this Socialist matter is a hollow scare, in England at least; that the proletariat have no hope, and therefore will lie quiet in this country, where

the rapid and nearly complete development of commercialism has crushed the power of combination out of the lower classes; where the very combinations, the Trades Unions, founded for the advancement of the working class as a class, have already become conservative and obstructive bodies, wielded by the middle-class politicians for party purposes; where the proportion of the town and manufacturing districts to the country is so great that the inhabitants, no longer recruited by the peasantry but become townsmen bred of townsmen, are yearly deteriorating in physique; where lastly education is so backward.

It may be that in England the mass of the working classes has no hope; that it will not be hard to keep them down for a while, possibly a long while. The hope that this may be so I will say plainly is a dastard's hope, for it is founded on the chance of their degradation. I say such an expectation is that of slave-holders or the hangers-on of slave-holders. I believe, however, that hope is growing among the working classes even in England; at any rate you may be sure of one thing, that there is at least discontent. Can any of us doubt that, since there is unjust suffering? Or which of us would be contented with ten shillings a week to keep our households with, or to dwell in unutterable filth and have to pay the price of good lodging for it? Do you doubt that if we had any time for it amidst our struggle to live we should look into the title of those who kept us there, themselves rich and comfortable, under the pretext that it was necessary to society? I tell you there is plenty of discontent, and I call on all those who think there is something better than making money for the sake of making it to help in educating that discontent into hope, that is into the

demand for the new birth of society; and I do this not because I am afraid of it, but because I myself am discontented and long for justice.

Yet, if any of you are afraid of the discontent which is abroad, in its present shape, I cannot say that you have no reason to be. I am representing reconstructive Socialism before you; but there are other people who call themselves Socialists whose aim is not reconstruction, but destruction; people who think that the present state of things is horrible and unbearable (as in very truth it is), and that there is nothing for it but to shake society by constant blows given at any sacrifice, so that it may at last totter and fall. May it not be worth while, think you, to combat such a doctrine by supplying discontent with hope of change that involves reconstruction? Meanwhile, be sure that, though the day of change may be long delayed, it will come at last. The middle classes will one day become conscious of the discontent of the proletariat; before that some will have renounced their class and cast in their lot with the working men, influenced by love of justice or insight into facts. For the rest, they will, when their conscience is awakened, have two choices before them; they must either cast aside their morality, of which though three parts are cant, the other is sincere, or they must give way. In either case I do believe that the change will come, and that nothing will seriously retard that new birth; yet I well know that the middle class may do much to give a peaceable or a violent character to the education of discontent which must precede it. Hinder it, and who knows what violence you may be driven into, even to the renunciation of the morality of which we middle-class men are so proud; advance it, strive single-heart-

edly that truth may prevail, and what need you fear? At any rate not your own violence, not your own tyranny?

Again I say things have gone too far, and the pretence at least of a love of justice is too common among us, for the middle classes to attempt to keep the proletariat in its condition of slavery to capital, as soon as they stir seriously in the matter, except at the cost of complete degradation to themselves, the middle class, whatever else may happen. I cannot help hoping that there are some here who are already in dread of the shadow of that degradation of consciously sustaining an injustice, and are eager to escape from that half-ignorant tyranny of which Keats tells, and which is, sooth to say, the common condition of rich people. To those I have a last word or two to say in begging them to renounce their class pretensions and cast in their lot with the working men. It may be that some of them are kept from actively furthering the cause which they believe in by that dread of organisation, by that unpracticality in a word, which, as it is very common in England generally, is more common among highly cultivated people, and, if you will forgive the word, most common in our ancient universities. Since I am a member of a Socialist propaganda I earnestly beg those of you who agree with me to help us actively, with your time and your talents if you can, but if not, at least with your money, as you can. Do not hold aloof from us, since you agree with us, because we have not attained that delicacy of manners, that refinement of language, nay, even that prudent and careful wisdom of action which the long oppression of competitive commerce has crushed out of us.

Art is long and life is short; let us at least do something before we die. We seek perfection, but can find

no perfect means to bring it about; let it be enough for us if we can unite with those whose aims are right, and their means honest and feasible. I tell you if we wait for perfection in association in these days of combat we shall die before we can do anything. Help us now, you whom the fortune of your birth has helped to make wise and refined; and as you help us in our work-a-day business toward the success of the cause, instil into us your superior wisdom, your superior refinement, and you in your turn may be helped by the courage and hope of those who are not so completely wise and refined. Remember we have but one weapon against that terrible organisation of selfishness which we attack, and that weapon is Union. Yes, and it should be obvious union, which we can be conscious of as we mix with others who are hostile or indifferent to the cause; organised brotherhood is that which must break the spell of anarchical Plutocracy. One man with an idea in his head is in danger of being considered a madman; two men with the same idea in common may be foolish, but can hardly be mad; ten men sharing an idea begin to act, a hundred draw attention as fanatics, a thousand and society begins to tremble, a hundred thousand and there is war abroad, and the cause has victories tangible and real; and why only a hundred thousand? Why not a hundred million and peace upon the earth? You and I who agree together, it is we who have to answer that question.

VII

THE REVIVAL OF ARCHITECTURE

Among cultivated people at present there is a good deal of interest felt or affected in the ornamental arts and their prospects. Since all these arts are dependent on the master-art of architecture almost for their existence, and cannot be in a healthy condition if it is sick, it may be worth while to consider what is the condition of architecture in this country; whether or no we have a living style which can lay claim to a dignity or beauty of its own, or whether our real style is merely a habit of giving certain forms not worth noticing to an all-pervading ugliness and meanness.

In the first place, then, it must be admitted on all sides that there has been in this century something like a revival of architecture; the question follows whether that revival indicates a genuine growth of real vitality which is developing into something else, or whether it merely points to a passing wave of fashion which, when passed, will leave nothing enduring behind it. I can think of no better way of attempting a solution of this question than the giving a brief sketch of the history of this revival as far as I have noted it. The revival of the art of architecture in Great Britain may be said to have been a natural consequence of the rise of the romantic school in literature, although it lagged some way

behind it, and naturally so, since the art of building has to deal with the prosaic incidents of everyday life, and is limited by the material exigencies of its existence. Up to a period long after the death of Shelley and Keats and Scott, architecture could do nothing but produce on the one hand pedantic imitations of classical architecture of the most revolting ugliness, and ridiculous travesties of Gothic buildings, not quite so ugly, but meaner and sillier; and, on the other hand, the utilitarian brick-box with a slate lid which the Anglo-Saxon generally in modern times considers as a good sensible house with no nonsense about it.

The first symptoms of change in this respect were brought about by the Anglo-Catholic movement, which must itself be considered as part of the romantic movement in literature, and was supported by many who had no special theological tendencies, as a protest against the historical position and stupid isolation of Protestantism. Under this influence there arose a genuine study of mediæval architecture, and it was slowly discovered that it was not, as was thought in the days of Scott, a mere accidental jumble of picturesqueness consecrated by ruin and the lapse of time, but a logical and organic style evolved as a matter of necessity from the ancient styles of the classical peoples, and advancing step by step with the changes in the social life of barbarism and feudalism and civilisation. Of course it took long to complete this discovery, nor as a matter of fact is it admitted in practice by many of the artists and architects of to-day, though the best of them feel, instinctively perhaps, the influence of the new school of historians, of whom the late John Richard Green and Professor Freeman may be cited as examples, and who have long been familiar with it.

One unfortunate consequence the study of mediæval art brought with it, owing indeed to the want of the admission of its historical evolution just mentioned. When the architects of this country had learned something about the building and ornament of the Middle Ages, and by dint of sympathetic study had more or less grasped the principles on which the design of that period was founded, they had a glimmer of an idea that those principles belonged to the æsthetics of all art in all countries, and were capable of endless development; they saw dimly that Gothic art had been a living organism, but though they knew that it had perished, and that its place had been taken by something else, they did not know why it had perished, and thought it could be artificially replanted in a society totally different from that which gave birth to it. The result of this half-knowledge led them to believe that they had nothing to do but to design on paper according to the principles the existence of which they had divined in Gothic architecture, and that the buildings so designed, when carried out under their superintendence, would be true examples of the ancient style, made alive by those undying principles of the art. On this assumption it was natural that they should attempt with confidence to remedy the injuries and degradations which the ignorance, brutality, and vulgarity of the post-Gothic periods had brought on those priceless treasures of art and history, the buildings yet left to us from the Middle Ages. Hence arose the fatal practice of "restoration," which in a period of forty years has done more damage to our ancient buildings than the preceding three centuries of revolutionary violence, sordid greed (utilitarianism so called), and pedantic contempt. This side

of the subject I have no space to dwell on further here. I can only say that if my subject could be looked on from no other point of view than the relation of modern architecture to the preservation of these relics of the past, it would be most important to face the facts of the present condition of the art amongst us, lest a mere delusion as to our position should lead us to throw away these treasures which once lost can never be recovered. No doubt, on the other hand, this same half-knowledge gave the new school of architects courage to carry on their work with much spirit, and as a result we have a considerable number of buildings throughout the country which do great credit to the learning and talent of their designers, and some of them even show signs of genius struggling through the difficulties which beset an architect attempting to produce beauty in the midst of the most degrading utilitarianism.

In the early period of this Gothic revival the buildings thus produced were mostly ecclesiastical. The public were easily persuaded that the buildings destined for the use of the Anglican Church, which was obviously in part a survival from the Church of the Middle Ages, should be of the style which obtained in the period to which the greater part of its buildings belonged; and indeed it used to be customary to use the word "ecclesiastical" as a synonym for mediæval architecture. Of course this absurdity was exploded among the architects at a very early stage of the revival, although it lingered long and perhaps still lingers amongst the general public. It was soon seen by those who studied the arts of the Middle Ages that there was no difference in style between the domestic and civil and the ecclesiastical architecture of that period, and the full appreci-

ation of this fact marks the second stage in the "Gothic Revival."

Then came another advance: those who sympathised with that great period of the development of the human race, the Middle Ages, especially such of them as had the gift of the historical sense which may be said to be a special gift of the nineteenth century, and a kind of compensation for the ugliness which surrounds our lives at present: these men now began not only to understand that the mediæval art was no mere piece of reactionary official ecclesiasticism or the expression of an extinct theology, but a popular, living, and progressive art, and that progressive art had died with it; they came to recognise that the art of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries drew what vigour and beauty it had from the impulse of the period that preceded it, and that when that died out about the middle of the seventeenth century nothing was left but a *caput mortuum* of inanity and pedantry, which demanded perhaps a period of stern utilitarianism to form, as it were, the fallow of the arts before the new seed could be sown.

Both as regards art and history this was an important discovery. Undismayed by their position of isolation from the life of the present, the leaders of this fresh renaissance set themselves to the stupendous task of taking up the link of historical art where the pedants of the older so-called renaissance had dropped it, and tried to prove that the mediæval style was capable of new life and fresh development, and that it could adapt itself to the needs of the nineteenth century. On the surface this hope of theirs seemed justified by the marvellous elasticity which the style showed in the period of its real life. Nothing was too great or too little, too

commonplace or too sublime for its inclusive embrace; no change dismayed it, no violence seriously checked it; in those older days it was a part of the life of man, the universal, indispensable expression of his joys and sorrows. Could it not be so again? we thought; had not the fallow of the arts lasted long enough? Were the rows of square brown brick boxes which Keats and Shelley had to look on, or the stuccoed villa which enshrined Tennyson's genius, to be the perpetual concomitants of such masters of verbal beauty; was no beauty but the beauty of words to be produced by man in our times; was the intelligence of the age to be for ever so preposterously lop-sided? We could see no reason for it, and accordingly our hope was strong; for though we had learned something of the art and history of the Middle Ages, we had not learned enough. It became the fashion amongst the hopeful artists of the time I am thinking of to say that in order to have beautiful surroundings there was no need to alter any of the conditions and manners of our epoch; that an easy chair, a piano, a steam-engine, a billiard-table, or a hall fit for the meeting of the House of Commons had nothing essential in them which compelled us to make them ugly, and that if they had existed in the Middle Ages the people of the time would have made them beautiful. Which certainly had an element of truth in it, but was not all the truth. It was indeed true that the mediæval instinct for beauty would have exercised itself on whatsoever fell to its lot to do, but it was also true that the life of the times did not put into the hands of the workman any object which was merely utilitarian, still less vulgar; whereas the life of modern times forces on him the production of many

things which can be nothing but utilitarian, as for instance a steam-engine; and of many things in which vulgarity is innate and inevitable, as a gentlemen's club-house or the ceremonial of our modern bureaucratic monarchy. Anyhow, this period of fresh hope and partial insight produced many interesting buildings and other works of art, and afforded a pleasant time indeed to the hopeful but very small minority engaged in it, in spite of all vexations and disappointments. At last one man, who had done more than any one else to make this hopeful time possible, drew a line sternly through these hopes founded on imperfect knowledge. This man was John Ruskin. By a marvellous inspiration of genius (I can call it nothing else) he attained at one leap to a true conception of mediæval art which years of minute study had not gained for others. In his chapter in "The Stones of Venice," entitled "On the Nature of Gothic, and the Function of the Workman therein," he showed us the gulf which lay between us and the Middle Ages. From that time all was changed; ignorance of the spirit of the Middle Ages was henceforth impossible, except to those who wilfully shut their eyes. The aims of the new revival of art grew to be infinitely greater than they had been in those who did not give up all aim, as I fear many did. From that time forth those who could not learn the new knowledge were doomed to become pedants, differing only in the externals of the art they practised or were interested in from the unhistorical big-wigs of the eighteenth century. Yet the essence of what Ruskin then taught us was simple enough, like all great discoveries. It was really nothing more recondite than this, that the art of any epoch must of necessity be the expression of

its social life, and that the social life of the Middle Ages allowed the workman freedom of individual expression, which on the other hand our social life forbids him.

I do not say that the change in the Gothic revivalists produced by this discovery was sudden, but it was effective. It has gradually sunk deep into the intelligence of the art and literature of to-day, and has had a great deal to do with the sundering of the highest culture (if one must use that ugly word) into a peculiarly base form of cynicism on the one hand, and into practical and helpful altruism on the other. The course taken by the Gothic revival in architecture, which, as aforesaid, is the outward manifestation of the Romantic school generally, shows decided tokens of the growing consciousness of the essential difference between our society and that of the Middle Ages. When our architects and archæologists first mastered, as they supposed, the practice and principles of Gothic art, and began the attempt to reintroduce it as a universal style, they came to the conclusion that they were bound to take it up at the period when it hung balanced between completion and the very first beginnings of degradation. The end of the thirteenth and beginning of the fourteenth century was the time they chose as that best fitted for the foundation of the Neo-Gothic style, which they hoped was destined to conquer the world; and in choosing this period on the verge of transition they showed remarkable insight and appreciation of the qualities of the style. It had by that time assimilated to itself whatever it could use of classical art, mingled with the various elements gathered from the barbaric ancient monarchies and the northern tribes, while for itself it had no consciousness

of them, nor was in any way trammelled by them; it was flexible to a degree yet undreamed of in any previous style of architecture, and had no difficulties in dealing with any useful purpose, any material or climate; and with all this it was undeniably and frankly beautiful, cumbered by no rudeness, and degraded by no whim. The hand and the mind of man, one would think, can carry loveliness (a loveliness, too, that never cloys) no further than in the architectural works of that period, as for instance in the choir and transepts of Westminster Abbey before it had suffered from degradations of later days, which truly make one stand aghast at the pitch of perversity which men can reach at times. It must be remembered too, in estimating the judgment of the Neo-Gothic architects, that the half-century from 1280 to 1320 was the blossoming time of architecture all over that part of the world which had held fast to historical continuity; and the East as well as the West produced its loveliest works of ornament and art at that period. This development, moreover, was synchronous with the highest point of the purely mediæval organisation of industry. By that time the Guild-merchants and Lineages of the free towns, which had grown aristocratic, exclusive, and divorced from actual labour, had had to yield to the craft-guilds, democratic bodies of actual workmen, which had now taken the position that they had long striven for, and were the masters of all industry. It was not the monasteries, as we used to be told, which were the hives of the art of the fourteenth century, but the free towns with their crafts organised for battle as well as craftsmanship; not the reactionary but the progressive part of the society of the time.

This central period therefore of the Gothic style,

which expressed the full development of the social system of the Middle Ages, was undoubtedly the fittest period to choose for the tree on which to graft the young plant of Neo-Gothic; and at the time of which I am now thinking every architect of promise would have repudiated with scorn the suggestion that he should use any later or impurer style for the works he had to carry out. Indeed there was a tendency, natural enough, to undervalue the qualities of the later forms of Gothic, a tendency which was often carried to grotesque extremes, and the semi-Gothic survivals of the late sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries were looked on with mere contempt, in theory at least. But as time passed and the revivalists began to recognise, whether they would or no, the impossibility of bridging the gulf between the fourteenth and the nineteenth centuries; as in spite of their brilliant individual successes they found themselves compelled to admit that the Neo-Gothic graft refused to grow in the commercial air of the Victorian era; as they toiled conscientiously and wearily to reconcile the Podsnappery of modern London with the expression of the life of Simon de Montfort and Philip van Artevelde, they discovered that they had pitched their note too high, and must try again, or give up the game altogether. By that time they had thoroughly learned the merits of the later Gothic styles, and even of the style which in England at least (as in literature so in art) had retained some of the beauty and fitness of the palmy days of Gothic amidst the conceits, artificialities, and euphuism of the time of Elizabeth and James the First; nay, they began to overvalue the remains of the inferior styles, not through pedantry, but rather perhaps from sympathy with the course of history, and repulsion from

the pessimism which narrows the period of high aspirations and pleasure in life to the standard of our own passing moods. In the main, however, they were moved in this direction by the hope of finding another standpoint for the new and living style which they still hoped to set on foot; the elasticity and adaptability of the style of the fifteenth century, of which every village church in England gives us examples, and the great mass of the work achieved by it, in domestic as well as church architecture, ready to hand for study, as well as the half-conscious feeling of its being nearer to our own times and expressing a gradually-growing complexity of society, captivated the revivalists with a fresh hope. The dream of beauty and romance of the fourteenth century was gone; might not the more work-a-day "Perpendicular" give us a chance for the housing of Mr. Podsnap's respectability and counting-house, and bosom-of-the-family, and Sunday worship, without too manifest an absurdity?

So the architects began on the fifteenth-century forms, and as by this time they had gained more and more knowledge of mediæval aims and methods, they turned out better and better work; but still the new living style would not come. The Neo-Gothic in the fourteenth-century style was often a fair rendering of its original; the fifteenth-century rendering has been often really good, and not seldom has had an air of originality about it that makes one admire the capacity and delicate taste of its designers; but nothing comes of it; it is all hung in the air, so to say. London has not begun to look like a fifteenth-century city, and no flavour of beauty or even of generous building has begun to make itself felt in the numberless houses built in the suburbs.

Meantime from the fifteenth century we have sunk by a natural process to imitating something later yet, something so much nearer our own time and our own manners and ways of life, that a success might have been expected to come out of this at least. The brick style in vogue in the time of William the Third and Queen Anne is surely not too sublime for general use; even Podsnap might acknowledge a certain amount of kinship with the knee-breeched, cocked-hatted bourgeois of that period; might not the graft of the new style begin to grow now, when we have abandoned the Gothic altogether, and taken to a style that belongs to the period of the workshop and division of labour, a period when all that was left of the craft-guilds was the corruption of them, the mere abuses of the close corporations and companies under whose restrictions of labour the commercial class chafed so sorely, and which they were on the point of sweeping away entirely?

Well, it is true that at first sight the Queen Anne development has seemed to conquer modern taste more or less; but in truth it is only the barest shadow of it which has done so. The turn that some of our vigorous young architects (they were young then) took towards this latest of all domestic styles can be accounted for without quarrelling with their good taste or good sense. In truth, with the best of them it was not the differentia of the Queen Anne style that was the attraction; all that is a mere bundle of preposterous whims; it was the fact that in the style there was yet left some feeling of the Gothic, at least in places or under circumstances where the buildings were remote from the progressive side of the eighteenth century. There I say some of the Gothic feeling was left, joined to forms,

such as sash windows, yet possible to be used in our own times. The architects in search of a style might well say: "We have been driven from ditch to ditch; cannot we yet make a stand? The unapproachable grace and loveliness of the fourteenth century is hull down behind us, the fifteenth-century work is too delicate and too rich for the commonplace of to-day; let us be humble, and begin once more with the style of well-constructed fairly proportioned brick houses which stand London smoke well, and look snug and comfortable at some village end, or amidst the green trees of a squire's park. Besides, our needs as architects are not great; we don't want to build churches any more; the nobility have their palaces in town and country already" (I wish them joy of some of them!); "the working man cannot afford to live in anything that an architect could design; moderate-sized rabbit-warrens for rich middle-class men, and small ditto for the hanger-on groups to which we belong, is all we have to think of. Perhaps something of a style might arise amongst us from these lowly beginnings, though indeed we have come down a weary long way from Pugin's 'Contrasts.' We agree with him still, but we are driven to admire and imitate some of the very things he cursed, with our enthusiastic approbation." Well, a goodish many houses of this sort have been built, to the great comfort of the dwellers in them, I am sure; but the new style is so far from getting under way, that while on the other hand the ordinary builder is covering England with abortions which make us regret the brick box and slate lid of fifty years ago, the cultivated classes are rather inclined to return to the severity (that is to say, the unmitigated expensive ugliness) of the last dregs of would-be Palladian, as exemplified in the stone lumps

of the Georgian period. Indeed I have not heard that the "educated middle classes" had any intention of holding a riotous meeting on the adjacent Trafalgar Square to protest against the carrying out of the designs for the new public offices which the Aedileship of Mr. Shaw-Lefevre threatened us with. As to public buildings, Mr. Street's Law Courts are the last attempt we are likely to see of producing anything reasonable or beautiful for that use; the public has resigned itself to any mass of dulness and vulgarity that it may be convenient for a department to impose upon it, probably from a half-conscious impression that at all events it will be good enough for the work (so-called) which will be done in it.

In short we must answer the question with which this paper began by saying that the architectural revival, though not a mere piece of artificial nonsense, is too limited in its scope, too much confined to an educated group, to be a vital growth capable of true development. The important fact in it is that it is founded on the sympathy for history and the art of historical generalisation, which, as aforesaid, is a gift of our epoch, but unhappily a gift in which few as yet have a share. Among populations where this gift is absent, not even scattered attempts at beauty in architecture are now possible, and in such places generations may live and die, if society as at present constituted endures, without feeling any craving for beauty in their daily lives; and even under the most favourable circumstances there is no general impulse born out of necessity towards beauty, which impulse alone can produce a universal architectural style, that is to say, a habit of elevating and beautifying the houses, furniture, and other material surroundings of our life.

All we have that approaches architecture is the result of a quite self-conscious and very laborious eclecticism, and is avowedly imitative of the work of past times, of which we have gained a knowledge far surpassing that of any other period. Meanwhile whatever is done without conscious effort, that is to say the work of the true style of the epoch, is an offence to the sense of beauty and fitness, and is admitted to be so by all men who have any perception of beauty of form. It is no longer passively but actively ugly, since it has added to the dreary utilitarianism of the days of Dr. Johnson a vulgarity which is the special invention of the Victorian era. The genuine style of that era is exemplified in the jerry-built houses of our suburbs, the stuccoed marine-parades of our watering-places, the flaunting corner public-houses of every town in Great Britain, the raw-boned hideousness of the houses that mar the glorious scenery of the Queen's Park at Edinburgh. These form our true Victorian architecture. Such works as Mr. Bodley's excellent new buildings at Magdalen College, Mr. Norman Shaw's elegantly fantastic Queen Anne Houses at Chelsea, or Mr. Robson's simple but striking London board schools, are mere eccentricities with which the public in general has no part or lot.

This is stark pessimism, my readers may say. Far from it. The enthusiasm of the Gothic revivalists died out when they were confronted by the fact that they form part of a society which will not and cannot have a living style, because it is an economical necessity for its existence that the ordinary everyday work of its population shall be mechanical drudgery; and because it is the harmony of the ordinary everyday work of the population which produces Gothic, that is, living architectural art,

and mechanical drudgery cannot be harmonised into art. The hope of our ignorance has passed away, but it has given place to the hope born of fresh knowledge. History taught us the evolution of architecture, it is now teaching us the evolution of society; and it is clear to us, and even to many who refuse to acknowledge it, that the society which is developing out of ours will not need or endure mechanical drudgery as the lot of the general population; that the new society will not be hag-ridden as we are by the necessity for producing ever more and more market wares for a profit, whether any one needs them or not; that it will produce to live, and not live to produce, as we do. Under such conditions architecture, as a part of the life of people in general, will again become possible, and I believe that when it is possible, it will have a real new birth, and add so much to the pleasure of life that we shall wonder how people were ever able to live without it. Meantime we are waiting for that new development of society, some of us in cowardly inaction, some of us amidst hopeful work towards the change; but at least we are all waiting for what must be the work, not of the leisure and taste of a few scholars, authors, and artists, but of the necessities and aspirations of the workmen throughout the civilised world.

VIII

THE REVIVAL OF HANDICRAFT

For some time past there has been a good deal of interest shown in what is called our modern slang Art Workmanship, and quite recently there has been a growing feeling that this art workmanship to be of any value must have some of the workman's individuality imparted to it beside whatever of art it may have got from the design of the artist who has planned, but not executed the work. This feeling has gone so far that there is growing up a fashion for demanding handmade goods even when they are not ornamented in any way, as, for instance, woollen and linen cloth spun by hand and woven without power, hand-knitted hosiery, and the like. Nay, it is not uncommon to hear regrets for the hand labour in the fields, now fast disappearing from even backward districts of civilised countries. The scythe, the sickle, and even the flail are lamented over, and many are looking forward with drooping spirits to the time when the hand plough will be as completely extinct as the quern, and the rattle of the steam-engine will take the place of the whistle of the curly-headed ploughboy through all the length and breadth of the land. People interested, or who suppose that they are interested, in the details of the arts of life feel a desire to revert to methods of handicraft for production in general; and

it may therefore be worth considering how far this is a mere reactionary sentiment incapable of realisation, and how far it may foreshadow a real coming change in our habits of life as irresistible as the former change which has produced the system of machine production, the system against which revolt is now attempted.

In this paper I propose to confine the aforesaid consideration as much as I can to the effect of machinery *versus* handicraft upon the arts; using that latter word as widely as possible, so as to include all products of labour which have any claims to be considered beautiful. I say as far as possible; for as all roads lead to Rome, so the life, habits, and aspirations of all groups and classes of the community are founded on the economical conditions under which the mass of the people live, and it is impossible to exclude socio-political questions from the consideration of æsthetics. Also, although I must avow myself a sharer in the above-mentioned reactionary regrets, I must at the outset disclaim the mere æsthetic point of view which looks upon the ploughman and his bullocks and his plough, the reaper, his work, his wife, and his dinner, as so many elements which compose a pretty tapestry hanging, fit to adorn the study of a contemplative person of cultivation, but which it is not worth while differentiating from each other except in so far as they are related to the beauty and interest of the picture. On the contrary, what I wish for is that the reaper and his wife should have themselves a due share in all the fulness of life; and I can, without any great effort, perceive the justice of their forcing me to bear part of the burden of its deficiencies, so that we may together be forced to attempt to remedy them, and have no very heavy burden to carry between us.

To return to our æsthetics: though a certain part of the cultivated classes of to-day regret the disappearance of handicraft from production, they are quite vague as to how and why it is disappearing, and as to how and why it should or may reappear. For to begin with the general public is grossly ignorant of all the methods and processes of manufacture. This is of course one result of the machine-system we are considering. Almost all goods are made apart from the life of those who use them; we are not responsible for them, our will has had no part in their production, except so far as we form a part of the market on which they can be forced for the profit of the capitalist whose money is employed in producing them. The market assumes that certain wares are wanted; it produces such wares, indeed, but their kind and quality are only adapted to the needs of the public in a very rough fashion, because the public needs are subordinated to the interest of the capitalist masters of the market, and they can force the public to put up with the less desirable article if they choose, as they generally do. The result is that in this direction our boasted individuality is a sham; and persons who wish for anything that deviates ever so little from the beaten path have either to wear away their lives in a wearisome and mostly futile contest with a stupendous organisation which disregards their wishes, or to allow those wishes to be crushed out for the sake of a quiet life.

Let us take a few trivial but undeniable examples. You want a hat, say, like that you wore last year; you go to the hatter's, and find you cannot get it there, and you have no resource but in submission. Money by itself won't buy you the hat you want; it will cost you three months' hard labour and twenty pounds to have an

inch added to the brim of your wideawake; for you will have to get hold of a small capitalist (of whom but few are left), and by a series of intrigues and resolute actions which would make material for a three-volume novel, get him to allow you to turn one of his hands into a handicraftsman for the occasion; and a very poor handicraftsman he will be, when all is said. Again, I carry a walking-stick, and like all sensible persons like it to have a good heavy end that will swing out well before me. A year or two ago it became the fashion to pare away all walking-sticks to the shape of attenuated carrots, and I really believe I shortened my life in my attempts at getting a reasonable staff of the kind I was used to, so difficult it was. Again, you want a piece of furniture which the trade (mark the word, Trade, not Craft!) turns out, blotched over with idiotic sham ornament; you wish to dispense with this degradation, and propose it to your upholsterer, who grudgingly assents to it; and you find that you have to pay the price of two pieces of furniture for the privilege of indulging your whim of leaving out the trade finish (I decline to call it ornament) on the one you have got made for you. And this is because it has been made by handicraft instead of machinery. For most people, therefore, there is a prohibitive price put upon the acquirement of the knowledge of methods and processes. We do not know how a piece of goods is made, what the difficulties are that beset its manufacture, what it ought to look like, feel like, smell like, or what it ought to cost apart from the profit of the middleman. We have lost the art of marketing, and with it the due sympathy with the life of the workshop, which would, if it existed, be such a wholesome check on the humbug of party politics.

It is a natural consequence of this ignorance of the methods of making wares, that even those who are in revolt against the tyranny of the excess of division of labour in the occupations of life, and who wish to recur more or less to handicraft, should also be ignorant of what that life of handicraft was when all wares were made by handicraft. If their revolt is to carry any hope with it, it is necessary that they should know something of this. I must assume that many or perhaps most of my readers are not acquainted with Socialist literature, and that few of them have read the admirable account of the different epochs of production given in Karl Marx' great work entitled "Capital." I must ask to be excused, therefore, for stating very briefly what, chiefly owing to Marx, has become a commonplace of Socialism, but is not generally known outside it. There have been three great epochs of production since the beginning of the Middle Ages. During the first or mediæval period all production was individualistic in method; for though the workmen were combined into great associations for protection and the organisation of labour, they were so associated as citizens not as mere workmen. There was little or no division of labour, and what machinery was used was simply of the nature of a multiplied tool, a help to the workman's hand labour and not a supplanter of it. The workman worked for himself and not for any capitalistic employer, and he was accordingly master of his work and his time; this was the period of pure handicraft. When in the latter half of the sixteenth century the capitalist employer and the so-called free workman began to appear, the workmen were collected into workshops, the old tool-machines were improved, and at last a new invention, the division of labour, found

its way into the workshops. The division of labour went on growing throughout the seventeenth century, and was perfected in the eighteenth, when the unit of labour became a group and not a single man ; or in other words the workman became a mere part of a machine composed sometimes wholly of human beings and sometimes of human beings plus labour-saving machines, which towards the end of this period were being copiously invented ; the fly-shuttle may be taken for an example of these. The latter half of the eighteenth century saw the beginning of the last epoch of production that the world has known, that of the automatic machine which supersedes hand labour, and turns the workman who was once a handicraftsman helped by tools, and next a part of a machine, into a tender of machines. And as far as we can see, the revolution in this direction as to kind is complete, though as to degree, as pointed out by Mr. David A. Wells last year (1887), the tendency is towards the displacement of ever more and more "muscular" labour, as Mr. Wells calls it.

This is very briefly the history of the evolution of industry during the last five hundred years ; and the question now comes : Are we justified in wishing that handicraft may in its turn supplant machinery ? Or it would perhaps be better to put the question in another way : Will the period of machinery evolve itself into a fresh period of machinery more independent of human labour than anything we can conceive of now, or will it develop its contradictory in the shape of a new and improved period of production by handicraft ? The second form of the question is the preferable one, because it helps us to give a reasonable answer to what people who have any interest in external beauty will certainly ask :

Is the change from handicraft to machinery good or bad? And the answer to that question is to my mind that, as my friend Belfort Bax has put it, statically it is bad, dynamically it is good. As a condition of life, production by machinery is altogether an evil; as an instrument for forcing on us better conditions of life it has been, and for some time yet will be, indispensable.

Having thus tried to clear myself of mere reactionary pessimism, let me attempt to show why statically handicraft is to my mind desirable, and its destruction a degradation of life. Well, first I shall not shrink from saying bluntly that production by machinery necessarily results in utilitarian ugliness in everything which the labour of man deals with, and that this is a serious evil and a degradation of human life. So clearly is this the fact that though few people will venture to deny the latter part of the proposition, yet in their hearts the greater part of cultivated civilised persons do not regard it as an evil, because their degradation has already gone so far that they cannot, in what concerns the sense of seeing, discriminate between beauty and ugliness: their languid assent to the desirableness of beauty is with them only a convention, a superstitious survival from the times when beauty was a necessity to all men. The first part of the proposition (that machine industry produces ugliness) I cannot argue with these persons, because they neither know, nor care for, the difference between beauty and ugliness; and with those who do understand what beauty means I need not argue it, as they are but too familiar with the fact that the produce of all modern industrialism is ugly, and that whenever anything which is old disappears, its place is taken by something inferior to it in beauty; and that even out in the

very fields and open country. The art of making beautifully all kinds of ordinary things, carts, gates, fences, boats, bowls, and so forth, let alone houses and public buildings, unconsciously and without effort has gone; when anything has to be renewed among these simple things the only question asked is how little it can be done for, so as to tide us over our responsibility and shift its mending on to the next generation.

It may be said, and indeed I have heard it said, that since there is some beauty still left in the world and some people who admire it, there is a certain gain in the acknowledged eclecticism of the present day, since the ugliness which is so common affords a contrast whereby the beauty, which is so rare, may be appreciated. This I suspect to be only another form of the maxim which is the sheet anchor of the laziest and most cowardly group of our cultivated classes, that it is good for the many to suffer for the few; but if any one puts forward in good faith the fear that we may be too happy in the possession of pleasant surroundings, so that we shall not be able to enjoy them, I must answer that this seems to me a very remote terror. Even when the tide at last turns in the direction of sweeping away modern squalor and vulgarity, we shall have, I doubt, many generations of effort in perfecting the transformation, and when it is at last complete, there will be first the triumph of our success to exalt us, and next the history of the long wade through the putrid sea of ugliness which we shall have at last escaped from. But furthermore, the proper answer to this objection lies deeper than this. It is to my mind that very consciousness of the production of beauty for beauty's sake which we want to avoid; it is just what is apt to produce affec-

tation and effeminacy amongst the artists and their following. In the great times of art conscious effort was used to produce great works for the glory of the City, the triumph of the Church, the exaltation of the citizens, the quickening of the devotion of the faithful; even in the higher art, the record of history, the instruction of men alive and to live hereafter, was the aim rather than beauty; and the lesser art was unconscious and spontaneous, and did not in any way interfere with the rougher business of life, while it enabled men in general to understand and sympathise with the nobler forms of art. But unconscious as these producers of ordinary beauty may be, they will not and cannot fail to receive pleasure from the exercise of their work under these conditions, and this above all things is that which influences me most in my hope for the recovery of handicraft. I have said it often enough, but I must say it once again, since it is so much a part of my case for handicraft, that so long as man allows his daily work to be mere unrelieved drudgery he will seek happiness in vain. I say further that the worst tyrants of the days of violence were but feeble tormentors compared with those Captains of Industry who have taken the pleasure of work away from the workmen. Furthermore I feel absolutely certain that handicraft joined to certain other conditions, of which more presently, would produce the beauty and the pleasure in work above mentioned; and if that be so, and this double pleasure of lovely surroundings and happy work could take the place of the double torment of squalid surroundings and wretched drudgery, have we not good reason for wishing, if it might be, that handicraft should once more step into the place of machine production?

I am not blind to the tremendous change which this revolution would mean. The maxim of modern civilisation to a well-to-do man is, Avoid taking trouble! Get as many of the functions of your life as you can performed by others for you! Vicarious life is the watchword of our civilisation, and we well-to-do and cultivated people live smoothly enough while it lasts. But, in the first place, how about the vicars, who do more for us than the singing of mass for our behoof for a scanty stipend? Will they go on with it for ever? For indeed the shuffling off of responsibilities from one to the other has to stop at last, and somebody has to bear the burden in the end. But let that pass, since I am not writing politics, and let us consider another aspect of the matter. What wretched lop-sided creatures we are being made by the excess of the division of labour in the occupations of life! What on earth are we going to do with our time when we have brought the art of vicarious life to perfection, having first complicated the question by the ceaseless creation of artificial wants which we refuse to supply for ourselves? Are all of us (we of the great middle class I mean) going to turn philosophers, poets, essayists, men of genius, in a word, when we have come to look down on the ordinary functions of life with the same kind of contempt wherewith persons of good breeding look down upon a good dinner, eating it sedulously however? I shudder when I think of how we shall bore each other when we have reached that perfection. Nay, I think we have already got in all branches of culture rather more geniuses than we can comfortably bear, and that we lack, so to say, audiences rather than preachers. I must ask pardon of my readers; but our case is at once so grievous and so

absurd that one can scarcely help laughing out of bitterness of soul. In the very midst of our pessimism we are boastful of our wisdom, yet we are helpless in the face of the necessities we have created, and which, in spite of our anxiety about art, are at present driving us into luxury unredeemed by beauty on the one hand, and squalor unrelieved by incident or romance on the other, and will one day drive us into mere ruin.

Yes, we do sorely need a system of production which will give us beautiful surroundings and pleasant occupation, and which will tend to make us good human animals, able to do something for ourselves, so that we may be generally intelligent instead of dividing ourselves into dull drudges or duller pleasure-seekers according to our class, on the one hand, or hapless pessimistic intellectual personages, and pretenders to that dignity, on the other. We do most certainly need happiness in our daily work, content in our daily rest; and all this cannot be if we hand over the whole responsibility of the details of our daily life to machines and their drivers. We are right to long for intelligent handicraft to come back to the world which it once made tolerable amidst war and turmoil and uncertainty of life, and which it should, one would think, make happy now we have grown so peaceful, so considerate of each other's temporal welfare.

Then comes the question, How can the change be made? And here at once we are met by the difficulty that the sickness and death of handicraft is, it seems, a natural expression of the tendency of the age. We willed the end, and therefore the means also. Since the last days of the Middle Ages the creation of an intellectual aristocracy has been, so to say, the spiritual

purpose of civilisation side by side with its material purpose of supplanting the aristocracy of status by the aristocracy of wealth. Part of the price it has had to pay for its success in that purpose (and some would say it is comparatively an insignificant part) is that this new aristocracy of intellect has been compelled to forgo the lively interest in the beauty and romance of life, which was once the portion of every artificer at least, if not of every workman, and to live surrounded by an ugly vulgarity which the world amidst all its changes has not known till modern times. It is not strange that until recently it has not been conscious of this degradation; but it may seem strange to many that it has now grown partially conscious of it. It is common now to hear people say of such and such a piece of country or suburb: "Ah! it was so beautiful a year or so ago, but it has been quite spoilt by the building." Forty years back the building would have been looked on as a vast improvement; now we have grown conscious of the hideousness we are creating, and we go on creating it. We see the price we have paid for our aristocracy of intellect, and even that aristocracy itself is more than half regretful of the bargain, and would be glad if it could keep the gain and not pay the full price for it. Hence not only the empty grumbling about the continuous march of machinery over dying handicraft, but also various elegant little schemes for trying to withdraw ourselves, some of us, from the consequences (in this direction) of our being superior persons; none of which can have more than a temporary and very limited success. The great wave of commercial necessity will sweep away all these well-meant attempts to stem it, and think little of what it has done, or whither it is going.

Yet after all even these feeble manifestations of discontent with the tyranny of commerce are tokens of a revolutionary epoch, and to me it is inconceivable that machine production will develop into mere infinity of machinery, or life wholly lapse into a disregard of life as it passes. It is true indeed that powerful as the cultivated middle class is, it has not the power of re-creating the beauty and romance of life; but that will be the work of the new society which the blind progress of commercialism will create, nay, is creating. The cultivated middle class is a class of slave-holders, and its power of living according to its choice is limited by the necessity of finding constant livelihood and employment for the slaves who keep it alive. It is only a society of equals which can choose the life it will live, which can choose to forgo gross luxury and base utilitarianism in return for the unwearying pleasure of tasting the fulness of life. It is my firm belief that we shall in the end realise this society of equals, and also that when it is realised it will not endure a vicarious life by means of machinery; that it will in short be the master of its machinery and not the servant, as our age is.

Meantime, since we shall have to go through a long series of social and political events before we shall be free to choose how we shall live, we should welcome even the feeble protest which is now being made against the vulgarisation of all life: first because it is one token amongst others of the sickness of modern civilisation; and next, because it may help to keep alive memories of the past which are necessary elements of the life of the future, and methods of work which no society could afford to lose. In short, it may be said that though the movement towards the revival of handicraft is contemp-

tible on the surface in face of the gigantic fabric of commercialism; yet, taken in conjunction with the general movement towards freedom of life for all, on which we are now surely embarked, as a protest against intellectual tyranny, and a token of the change which is transforming civilisation into socialism, it is both noteworthy and encouraging.

IX

ART AND INDUSTRY IN THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY

In England, at least, if not on the Continent of Europe, there are some towns and cities which have indeed a name that recalls associations with the past, but have no other trace left them of the course of that history which has made them what they are. Besides these, there are many more which have but a trace or two left; sometimes, indeed, this link with the past is so beautiful and majestic in itself that it compels us when we come across it to forget for a few moments the life of to-day with which we are so familiar that we do not mark its wonders or its meannesses, its follies or its tragedies. It compels us to turn away from our life of habit which is all about us on our right hand and our left, and which therefore we cannot see, and forces on us the consideration of past times which we can picture to ourselves as a whole, rightly or wrongly, because they are so far off. Sometimes, as we have been passing through the shabby streets of ill-burnt bricks, we have come on one of these links with the past and wondered. Before the eyes of my mind is such a place now. You travel by railway, get to your dull hotel by night, get up in the morning and breakfast in company with one or two men of the usual middle-class types, who even

as they drink their tea and eat their eggs and glance at the sheet of lies, inanity, and ignorance, called a newspaper, by their sides, are obviously doing their business to come, in a vision. You go out into the street and wander up it; all about the station, and stretching away to the left, is a wilderness of small, dull houses built of a sickly-coloured yellow brick pretending to look like stone, and not even able to blush a faint brown blush at the imposture, and roofed with thin, cold, purple-coloured slates. They cry out at you at the first glance, workmen's houses; and a kind of instinct of information whispers to you: railway workmen and engineers. Bright as the spring morning is, a kind of sick feeling of hopeless disgust comes over you, and you go on further, sure at any rate that you cannot fare worse. The street betters a little as you go on; shabbyish shops indeed, and mean houses of the bourgeoisie of a dull market town, exhibiting in their shop fronts a show of goods a trifle below the London standard, and looking "flash" at the best; and above them dull houses, greyish and reddish, recalling some associations of the stage coach days and Mr. Pickwick and Sam Weller, which would cheer you a little if you didn't see so many gaps in their lines filled up with the sickly yellow white brick and blue slate, and with a sigh remember that even the romance surrounding Mr. Winkle is fast vanishing from the world. You let your eyes fall to the pavement and stop and stare a little, revolving many things, at a greengrocer's shop whose country produce probably comes mostly from Covent Garden, but looks fresh and green as a relief from the jerry building. Then you take a step or two onward and raise your eyes, and stand transfixed with wonder, and a wave of pleasure and exulta-

tion sweeps away the memory of the squalidness of to-day and the shabby primness of yesterday; such a feeling as takes hold of the city-dweller when, after a night journey, he wakes and sees through his windows some range of great and noble mountains. And indeed this at the street's end is a mountain also; but wrought by the hand and the brain of man, and bearing the impress of his will and his aspirations; for there heaves itself up above the meanness of the street and its petty commercialism a mass of grey stone traceried and carved and moulded into a great triple portico beset with pinnacles and spires, so orderly in its intricacy, so elegant amidst its hugeness, that even without any thought of its history or meaning it fills your whole soul with satisfaction. You walk on a little and see before you at last an ancient gate that leads into the close of the great church, but as if dreading that when you come nearer you may find some piece of modern pettiness or incongruity which will mar it, you turn away down a cross street from which the huge front is no longer visible, though its image is still in your mind's eye. The street leads you in no long while to a slow-flowing river crossed by an ugly modern iron bridge, and you are presently out in the fields, and going down a long causeway with a hint of Roman work in it. It runs along the river through a dead flat of black, peaty-looking country where long rows of men and women are working with an overlooker near them, giving us uncomfortable suggestions of the land on the other side of the Atlantic as it was; and you half expect as you get near some of these groups to find them black and woolly haired; but they are white as we call it, burned and grimed to dirty brown though; fair-sized and strong-looking enough,

both men and women; but the women roughened and spoilt, with no remains of gracefulness, or softness of face or figure; the men heavy and depressed-looking; all that are not young, bent and beaten, and twisted and starved and weathered out of shape; in short, English field labourers. You turn your face away with a sigh toward the town again, and see towering over its mean houses and the sluggish river and the endless reclaimed fen the flank of that huge building, whose front you saw just now, plainer and severer than the front, but harmonious and majestic still. A long roof tops it and a low, square tower rises from its midst. The day is getting on now, and the wind setting from the north-west is driving the smoke from the railway works round the long roof and besmirching it somewhat; but still it looks out over the huddle of houses and the black fen with its bent rows of potato-hoers, like some relic of another world. What does it mean? Over there the railway works with their monotonous hideousness of dwelling-houses for the artisans; here the gangs of the field labourers; twelve shillings a week for ever and ever, and the workhouse for all day of judgment, of rewards and punishments; on each side and all around the nineteenth century, and rising solemnly in the midst of it, that token of the "dark ages," their hope in the past, grown now a warning for our future.

A thousand years ago our forefathers called the place Medehamstead, the abode of the meadows. They used the Roman works and doubtless knew little who wrought them, as by the side of the river Nene they drew together some stockaded collection of wooden and wattled houses. Then came the monks and built a church, which they dedicated to St. Peter; a much

smaller and ruder building than that whose beauty has outlasted so many hundred years of waste and neglect and folly, but which seemed grand to them; so grand, that what for its building, what for the richness of its shrines, Medehamstead got to be called the Golden Burg. Doubtless that long stretching water there knew more than the monks' barges and the coracles of the fen-men, and the oars of the Norsemen have often beaten it white; but records of the sacking of the Golden Burg I have not got till the time when a valiant man of the country, in desperate contest with Duke William, the man of Blood and Iron of the day, led on the host of the Danes to those rich shrines, and between them they stripped the Golden Burg down to its stone and timber. Hereward, that valiant man, was conquered and died, and what was left of the old tribal freedom of East England sank lower and lower into the Romanised feudality that crossed the Channel with the Frenchmen. But the country grew richer, and the craftsmen defter, and some three generations after that sacking of the Golden Burg, St. Peter's Church rose again, a great and noble pile, the most part of which we have seen to-day.

Time passed again; the feudal system had grown to its full height, and the cloud as big as a man's hand was rising up to overshadow it in the end. Doubtless this town played its part in this change: had a great guild changing to a commune, federating the craft-guilds under it; and was no longer called Medehamstead or the Golden Burg, but after its patron saint, Peterborough. And as a visible token of those times, the guilds built for the monks in the thirteenth century that wonderful piece of ordered beauty which you saw just now rising from out the grubby little streets of the early nineteenth

century. They added to the great Church here and there in the fourteenth century, traceried windows to the aisles, two spirelets to the front, that low tower in the midst. The fifteenth century added certain fringes and trimmings, so to say, to the building; and so it was left to bear as best it could the successive waves of degradation, the blindness of middle-class puritanism, the brutality of the eighteenth-century squirearchy, and the stark idealless stupidity of the early nineteenth century; and there it stands now, with the foul sea of modern civilisation washing against it; a token, as I said, of the hopes that were, and which civilisation has destroyed. Might it but give a lesson to the hopes that are, and which shall some day destroy civilisation!

For what was the world so utterly different from ours of this day, the world that completed the glories of the Golden Burg, which to-day is called Peterborough, and is chiefly known, I fear, as the depôt of the Great Northern Railway? This glorious building is a remnant of the feudal system, which even yet is not so well understood amongst us as it should be; and especially, people scarcely understand how great a gulf lies between the life of that day and the life of ours. The hypocrisy of so-called constitutional development has blinded us to the greatness of the change which has taken place; we use the words King, Parliament, Commerce, and so on, as if their connotation was the same as in that past time. Let us very briefly see, for the sake of a better understanding of the art and industry embodied in such works as Peterborough Cathedral, what was the relation of the complete feudal system with its two tribes, the one the unproductive masters, the other the productive servants, to the older incomplete feudality which it

superseded; or in other words, what the Middle Ages came to before the development of the seeds of decay in them became obvious.

On the surface, the change from the serf and baron society of the earlier Middle Ages to the later Guild and Parliament Middle Ages was brought about by the necessities of feudalism. The necessities of the conquering or unproductive tribe gave opportunities to the progressive part of the conquered or productive tribe to raise its head out of the mere serfdom which in earlier times had been all it could look to. At bottom, this process of the rise of the towns under feudalism was the result of economical causes. The poor remains of the old tribal liberties, the folkmotes, the meetings round the shire-oak, the trial by compurgation, all these customs which imply the equality of freemen, would have faded into mere symbols and traditions of the past if it had not been for the irrepressible life and labour of the people, of those who really did the work of society in the teeth of the arbitrary authority of the feudal hierarchy. For you must remember that its very arbitrariness made the latter helpless before the progress of the productive part of that society. The upper classes had not got hold of those material means of production which enable them now to make needs in order to satisfy them for the sake of profit; the miracle of the world market had not yet been exhibited. Commerce, in our sense of the word, did not exist: people produced for their own consumption, and only exchanged the overplus of what they did not consume. A man would then sell the results of his labour in order to buy wherewithal to live upon or to live better; whereas at present he buys other people's labour in order to sell its results, that he may

buy yet more labour, and so on to the end of the chapter; the mediæval man began with production, the modern begins with money. That is, there was no capital in our sense of the word; nay, it was a main care of the crafts, as we shall see later on, that there should be none. The money lent at usury was not lent for the purposes of production, but as spending-money for the proprietors of land: and their land was not capitalisable as it now is; they had to eat its produce from day to day, and used to travel about the country doing this like bands of an invading army, which was indeed what they were; but they could not, while the system lasted, drive their now tenants, erewhile serfs, off their lands, or fleece them beyond what the custom of the manor allowed, unless by sheer violence or illegal swindling; and also every free man had at least the use of some portion of the soil on which he was born. All this means that there was no profit to be made out of anything but the land; and profit out of that was confined to the lords of the soil, the superior tribe, the invading army, as represented in earlier times by Duke William and his hirelings. But even they could not accumulate their profit: the very serfdom that enabled them to live as an unproductive class forbade them to act as land capitalists: the serfs had to perform the customary services and nothing more, and thereby got a share of the produce over and above the economic rent, which surplus would to-day certainly not go to the cultivators of the soil. Now since all the class-robbery that there was was carried on by means of the land, and that not by any means closely or carefully, in spite of distinct arbitrary laws directed against the workers, which again were never fully carried out, it follows that it was easy for the productive class to live.

Poor men's money was good, says one historian; necessaries were very cheap, that is, ordinary food (not the cagmag of to-day), ordinary clothing and housing; but luxuries were dear. Spices from the East, foreign fruits, cloth of gold, gold and silver plate, silk velvet, Arras tapestries, Iceland gerfalcons, Turkish dogs, lions, and the like, doubtless cost far more than they do to-day. For the rest, men's desires keep pace with their power over nature, and in those days their desires were comparatively few; the upper class did not live so much more comfortably then than the lower; so there were not the same grounds or room for discontent as there are nowadays. A workman then might have liked to possess a canopy of cloth of gold or a big cupboard of plate; whereas now the contrast is no longer between splendour and simplicity, but between ease and anxiety, refinement and sordidness.

The ordinary life of the workman then was easy; what he suffered from was either the accidents of nature, which the society of the day had not yet learned to conquer, or the violence of his masters, the business of whose life was then open war, as it is now veiled war. Storm, plague, famine and battle, were his foes then; scarcity and the difficulty of bringing goods from one place to another were what pinched him, not as now, superabundance and the swiftness of carriage. Yet, in some respects even here, the contrast was not so violent as it is nowadays between rich and poor; for, if the artisan was apt to find himself in a besieged city, and had to battle at all adventure for his decent life and easy work, there were vicissitudes enough in the life of the lord also, and the great prince who sat in his hall like a god one day surrounded by his gentlemen and men-at-arms might

find himself presently as the result of some luckless battle riding barefoot and bareheaded to the gallows-tree: distinguished politicians risked more then than they do now. A change of government was apt to take heads off shoulders.

What was briefly the process that led to this condition of things, a condition certainly not intended by the iron feudalism which aimed at embracing all life in its rigid grasp, and would not, if it had not been forced to it, have suffered the serf to escape from serfdom, the artisan to have any status except that of a serf, the guild to organise labour, or the town to become free? The necessities of the feudal lord were the opportunities of the towns: the former not being able to squeeze his serf-tenants beyond a certain point, and having no means of making his money grow, had to keep paying for his main position by yielding up what he thought he could spare of it to the producing classes. Of course, that is clear enough to see in reading mediæval history; but what gave the men of the towns the desire to sacrifice their hard earnings for the sake of position, for the sake of obtaining a status alongside that of the baron and the bishop? The answer to my mind is clear; the spirit of association which had never died out of the peoples of Europe, and which in Northern Europe at least had been kept alive by the guilds which in turn it developed; the strong organisation that feudalism could not crush.

The tale of the origin and development of the guilds is as long as it is interesting, and it can only be touched on here; for the history of the guilds is practically the history of the people in the Middle Ages, and what follows must be familiar to most of my readers. And I must begin by saying that it was not, as some would

think (speaking always of Northern Europe), the towns that made the guilds, but the guilds that made the towns. These latter, you must remember once more, important as they grew to be before the Middle Ages ended, did not start with being organised centres of life political and intellectual, with tracts of country whose business it was just to feed and nourish them; in other words, they did not start with being mere second-rate imitations of the Greek and Roman cities. They were simply places on the face of the country where the population drawn together by convenience was thicker than in the ordinary country, a collection of neighbours associating themselves together for the ordinary business of life, finding it convenient in those disturbed times to palisade the houses and closes which they inhabited and lived by. But even before this took place, and while the unit of habitation was not even a village, but a homestead (or tun), our Teutonic and Scandinavian forefathers, while yet heathens, were used to band themselves together for feasts and sacrifices and for mutual defence and relief against accident and violence into what would now be called benefit societies, but which they called guilds. The change of religion from heathenism to Christianity did not make any difference to these associations; but as society grew firmer and more peaceful, as the commerce of our forefathers became something more than the selling to one town what the traders had plundered from another, these guilds developed in one direction into associations for the defence of the carriers and sellers of goods (who you must remember in passing had little in common with our merchants and commercial people); and on the other side began to grow into associations for the regulation of the special crafts, amongst

which the building and clothing crafts were naturally pre-eminent. The development of these two sides of the guilds went on together, but at first the progress of the trading guilds, being administrative or political, was more marked than that of the craft-guilds, and their status was recognised much more readily by the princes of the feudal hierarchy; though I should say once for all that the direct development of the guilds did not flourish except in those countries where the undercurrent of the customs of the free tribes was too strong to be quite merged in the main stream of Romanised feudality. Popes, Bishops, emperors, and kings in their early days fulminated against them; for instance, an association in Northern France for resistance to the Norse sea-robbers was condemned under ferocious penalties. In England, at any rate, where the king was always carrying on a struggle with his baronage, he was generally glad to acknowledge the claims of the towns or communes to a free administration as a make-weight to the power of the great feudatories; and here as well as in Flanders, Denmark, and North Germany, the merchant guild was ready to form that administrative power, and so slid insensibly into the government of the growing towns under the name of the Great Guild, the Porte, the Lineage, and so on. These Great Guilds, the corporations of the towns, were from the first aristocratic and exclusive, even to the extent of excluding manual workmen; in the true spirit of Romanised feudalism, so diametrically opposed to that of the earlier tribal communities, in the tales of which the great chiefs are shown smithying armour, building houses and ships, and sowing their fields, just as the heroes of the Iliad and the Odyssey do. They were also exclusive in another

way, membership in them being in the main an hereditary privilege, and they became at last very harsh and oppressive. But these bodies divorced from labour and being nothing but governors, or at most administrators, on the one hand, and on the other not being an integral portion of the true feudal hierarchy, could not long hold their own against the guilds of craft, who all this while were producing and organising production. There was a continuous and fierce struggle between the aristocratic and democratic elements in the towns, and plenty of downright fighting, bitter and cruel enough after the fashion of the times; besides a gradual progress of the crafts in getting hold of the power in the communes or municipalities. This went on all through the thirteenth century, and in the early part of the fourteenth the artisans had everywhere succeeded, and the affairs of the towns were administered by the federated craft-guilds. This brings us to the culminating period of the Middle Ages, the period to which my remarks on the condition of labourers apply most completely; though you must remember that the spirit which finally won the victory for the craft-guilds had been at work from the first, contending not only against the mere tyranny and violence incidental to those rough times, but also against the hierarchical system, the essential spirit of feudality. The progress of the guilds, which from the first were social, was the form which the class struggle took in the Middle Ages.

I will now try to go a little more in detail into the conditions of art and industry in those days, conditions which it is clear, even from the scattered hints given above, are very different from those of to-day; so different indeed, that many people cannot conceive of them.

The rules of the crafts in the great towns of Flanders will give us as typical examples as can be got at; since the mechanical arts, especially of weaving, were there farther advanced than anywhere else in Northern Europe. Let us take then the cloth-weavers of Flanders, and see under what rules they worked. No master to employ more than three journeymen in his workshop: no one under any pretence to have more than one workshop: the wages fixed per day, and the number of hours also: no work to be done on holidays. If piecework (which was allowed), the price per yard fixed: but only so much and no more to be done in a day. No one allowed to buy wool privately, but at open sales duly announced. No mixing of wools allowed; the man who uses English wool (the best) not to have any other on his premises. English and other foreign cloth not allowed to be sold. Workmen not belonging to the commune not admitted unless hands fell short. Most of these rules and many others may be considered to have been made in the direct interest of the workmen. Now for safeguards for the public: the workman must prove that he knows his craft duly: he serves as apprentice first, then as journeyman, after which he is a master if he can manage capital enough to set up three looms besides his own, which, of course, he generally could do. Width of web is settled; colour of list according to quality; no work to be done in a frost, or in a bad light. All cloth must be "walked" or fulled a certain time, and to a certain width; and so on, and so on. And finally every piece of cloth must stand the test of examination, and if it fall short, goes back to the maker, who is fined; if it come up to the due standard it is marked as satisfactory.

Now you will see that the accumulation of capital

is impossible under such regulations as this, and it was meant to be impossible. The theory of industry among these communes was something like this. There is a certain demand for the goods which we can make, and a certain settled population to make them: if the goods are not thoroughly satisfactory we shall lose our market for them and be ruined: we must therefore keep up their quality to the utmost. Furthermore, the work to be done must be shared amongst the whole of those who can do it, who must be sure of work always as long as they are well behaved and industrious, and also must have a fair livelihood and plenty of leisure; as why should they not?

We shall find plenty of people to-day to cry out on this as slavery; but to begin with, history tells us that these workmen did not fight like slaves at any rate; and certainly a condition of slavery in which the slaves were well fed, and clothed, and housed, and had abundance of holidays has not often been realised in the world's history. Yes, some will say, but their minds were enslaved. Were they? Their thoughts moved in the narrow circle maybe; and yet I can't say that a man is of slavish mind who is free to express his thoughts, such as they are; still less if he habitually expresses them; least of all if he expresses them in a definite form which gives pleasure to other people, what we call producing works of art; and these workmen of the communes did habitually produce works of art.

I have told you that the chief contrast between the upper and lower classes of those days was that the latter lacked the showy pomp and circumstance of life, and that the contrast rather lay there than in refinement and non-refinement. It is possible that some readers might

judge from our own conditions that this lack involved the lack of art; but here, indeed, there was little cause for discontent on the part of the lower classes in those days; it was splendour rather than art in which they could feel any lack. It is, I know, so difficult to conceive of this nowadays that many people don't try to do so, but simply deny this fact; which is, however, undeniable by any one who had studied closely the art of the Middle Ages and its relation to the workers. I must say what I have often said before, that in those times there was no such thing as a piece of handicraft being ugly; that everything made had a due and befitting form; that most commonly, however ordinary its use might be, it was elaborately ornamented; such ornament was always both beautiful and inventive, and the mind of the workman was allowed full play and freedom in producing it; and also that for such art there was no extra charge made; it was a matter of course that such and such things should be ornamented, and the ornament was given and not sold. And this condition of the ordinary handicrafts with reference to the arts was the foundation of all that nobility of beauty which we were considering in a building like Peterborough Cathedral, and without that its beauty would never have existed. As it was, it was no great task to rear a building that should fill men's minds with awe and admiration when people fell to doing so of set purpose, in days when every cup and plate and knife-handle was beautiful.

When I had the Golden Burg in my eye just now, it was by no means only on account of its external beauty that I was so impressed by it, and wanted my readers to share my admiration, but it was also on account of the history embodied in it. To me it and its like are

tokens of the aspirations of the workers five centuries ago; aspirations of which time alone seemed to promise fulfilment, and which were definitely social in character. If the leading element of association in the life of the mediæval workman could have cleared itself of certain drawbacks, and have developed logically along the road that seemed to be leading it onward, it seems to me it could scarcely have stopped short of forming a true society founded on the equality of labour: the Middle Ages, so to say, saw the promised land of Socialism from afar, like the Israelites, and like them had to turn back again into the desert. For the workers of that time, like us, suffered heavily from their masters: the upper classes who lived on their labour, finding themselves barred from progress by their lack of relation to the productive part of society, and at the same time holding all political power, turned towards aggrandising themselves by perpetual war and shuffling of the political positions, and so opened the door to the advance of bureaucracy, and the growth of that thrice-accursed spirit of nationality which so hampers us even now in all attempts towards the realisation of a true society. Furthermore, the association of the time, instinct as it was with hopes of something better, was exclusive. The commune of the Middle Ages, like the classical city, was unhappily only too often at strife with its sisters, and so became a fitting instrument for the greedy noble or bureaucratic king to play on. The guildsman's duties were bounded on the one hand by the limits of his craft, and on the other by the boundaries of the liberties of his city or town. The instinct of union was there, otherwise the course of the progress of association would not have had the unity which it did have: but the means of inter-

course were lacking, and men were forced to defend the interests of small bodies against all comers, even those whom they should have received as brothers.

But, after all, these were but tokens of the real causes that checked the development of the Middle Ages towards Communism; that development can be traced from the survival of the primitive Communism which yet lived in the early days of the Middle Ages. The birth of tradition, strong in instinct, was weak in knowledge, and depended for its existence on its checking the desire of mankind for knowledge and the conquest of material nature: its own success in developing the resources of labour ruined it; it opened chances to men of growing rich and powerful if they could succeed in breaking down the artificial restrictions imposed by the guilds for the sake of the welfare of their members. The temptation was too much for the craving ignorance of the times, that were yet not so ignorant as not to have an instinct of what boundless stores of knowledge lay before the bold adventurer. As the need for the social and political organisation of Europe blotted out the religious feeling of the early Middle Ages which produced the Crusades, so the need for knowledge and the power over material nature swept away the communistic aspirations of the fourteenth century, and it was not long before people had forgotten that they had ever existed.

The world had to learn another lesson; it had to gain power, and not be able to use it; to gain riches, and starve upon them like Midas on his gold; to gain knowledge, and then have newspapers for its teachers; in a word, to be so eager to gather the results of the deeds of the life of man that it must forget the life of man itself. Whether the price of the lesson was worth

the lesson we can scarcely tell yet; but one comfort is that we are fast getting perfect in it; we shall, at any rate, not have to begin at the beginning of it again. The hope of the renaissance of the time when Europe first opened its mouth wide to fill its belly with the east wind of commercialism, that hope is passing away, and the ancient hope of the workmen of Europe is coming to life again. Times troublous and rough enough we shall have, doubtless, but not that dull time over again during which labour lay hopeless and voiceless under the muddle of self-satisfied competition.

It is not so hard now to picture to oneself those grey masses of stone, which our forefathers raised in their hope, standing no longer lost and melancholy over the ghastly misery of the fields and the squalor of the towns, but smiling rather on their new-born sisters the houses and halls of the free citizens of the new Communes, and the garden-like fields about them where there will be labour still, but the labour of the happy people who have shaken off the curse of labour and kept its blessing only. Between the time when the hope of the workman disappeared in the fifteenth century and our own times, there is a great gap indeed, but we know now that it will be filled up before long, and that our own lives from day to day may help to fill it. That is no little thing and is well worth living for, whatever else may fail us.

X

THE INFLUENCE OF BUILDING MATERIALS UPON ARCHITECTURE

DELIVERED BEFORE THE ART WORKERS' GUILD AT BARNARD'S INN HALL, LONDON

I AM afraid after all that, though the subject is a very important one, yet there are so many of you present who must know all about it, that you will find what I have to say is little better than commonplace. Still, you know there are occasions and times when commonplaces have to be so to say hammered home, and even those who profess the noble art of architecture want a certain sort of moral support in that line; they know perfectly well what they ought to do, but very often they find themselves in such an awkward position that they cannot do it, owing no doubt to the stupidity of their clients, who after all are not so stupid as they might be, one may think, since they employ them. Nevertheless, their clients generally are not educated persons on the subject of architecture.

Now the subject of Material is clearly the foundation of architecture, and perhaps one would not go very far wrong if one defined architecture as the art of building suitably with suitable material. There are certainly many other things which are considered architectural, and yet not nearly so intimately and essentially a part

of architecture, as a consideration of material. Also, it seems to me, there is one important thing to be considered with reference to material in architecture at the present time, when all people are seeking about for some sort of style. We know of course, and there is no use denying the fact, that we are in a period when style is a desideratum which everybody is seeking for, and which very few people find; and it seems to me that nothing is more likely to lead to a really living style than the consideration, first of all, as a *sine quâ non*, of the suitable use of material. In fact, I do not see how we are to have anything but perpetual imitation, eclectic imitation of this, that, and the other style in the past, unless we begin with considering what material lies about us, and how we are to use it, and the way to build it up in such a form as will really put us in the position of being architects, alive and practising to-day, and not merely architects handing over to a builder and to builder's men all the difficulties of the profession, and only keeping for ourselves that part of it which can be learnt in a mechanical and rule-of-thumb way.

Now I suppose, in considering the materials of a building, one ought to begin by considering the walls. I am not going to trouble myself very much about those materials which afford opportunities for the exercise of particular *finesse* in the way of architecture, but rather I shall refer to the more homely and everyday materials. I suppose one may fairly divide materials for the building of a wall into three sections; first stone, then timber, and lastly brick. In doing so, and in giving them that order, I distinctly myself mean to indicate the relative position of nobility between those three materials. Stone is definitely the most noble material, the most

satisfactory material; wood is the next, and brick is a makeshift material.

Those of you who are architects I am quite sure know the difficulties that you find yourselves involved in when you have to build a stone building. You will find probably that your London builder is not by any means the best man to go to. The fact of the matter is, London builders have really ceased to understand the ground principles on which stone should be used. Now I think the consideration of stone buildings has this extreme importance about it, that when you fairly begin to consider how best to deal with stone as a material, you have begun then first to free yourself from the bonds of mere academic architecture. The academical architect, it seems to me, assumes as a matter of course that all buildings are built with ashlar on the face of them, and not only so, but that all stone buildings through and through are built with ashlar. That is the impression an academical building always gives me, that it is built of great cubes of stone as big as you can possibly get them; and very naturally, because it seems to be something like a canon in academical architecture that if you want a building bigger than the average buildings, you must increase every one of its members in order to get to that great size, and the net result is, that the whole of the members of that academic building are all one size, and as a rule they all look about the size of a Wesleyan Methodist meeting-house; that is, you lose all scale. It seems to me that the use of stone in a proper and considerate manner does in the first place lead to your being able to get a definite size and scale to a building. The building no longer looks, as so many renaissance buildings do, as if it might just as well be built of

brick and plastered over with compo. You can see, in fact, the actual bones and structure. But it is something more than that; you can see in point of fact the life of it by studying the actual walls. This organic life of a building is so interesting, so beautiful even, that it is a distinct and definite pleasure to see a large blank wall without any ordinary architectural features, if it is really properly built and properly placed together. In point of fact this seems to me almost the beginning of architecture, that you can raise a wall which impresses you at once by its usefulness; its size, if it is big; its delicacy, if it is small; and in short by its actual life; that is the beginning of building altogether.

Now to go a little further into detail. The kind of building you want in different places is very different. There is a great deal of very beautiful building to be seen all about the country which is, in point of fact, built merely as a barn or a cart-shed is built; and I think it would be a great pity if we lost all that. We cannot build the whole of our buildings throughout the whole country in careful close-jointed ashlar, and I think it would be a great pity if we could; but the difference between the town and country, especially a big city, strikes me rather strongly in that respect. How many buildings one sees, big dignified buildings, gentlemen's country houses, standing in the middle of a park, or something of that kind, that are most inexpressibly dreary; to a great extent because they are not built in the ordinary fashion of the country-side in which they are raised, quite apart from any matter of architectural design. But in passing through the country one sees many examples of thoroughly good ordinary country buildings, built of the mere country materials, very often

of the mere stones out of the fields; and it is a very great pleasure to see the skill with which these buildings are constructed. They are very often not pointed at all, but you cannot help noticing the skill with which the mason has picked out his longs and his shorts, and put the thing together with really something, you must say, like rhythm and measurement (his traditional skill that was), and with the best possible results. I cannot help thinking that on the whole London and the big towns are not places where stone building is usually desirable. There is only one stone, it seems to me, that looks tolerably well in London, and that is good Portland stone; and that looks well partly owing to the curious way in which the exposed parts of it get whistled by the wind, and the mouldings and hollows and all the rest of it get blackened, the very smoke even doing something probably for Portland stone in London. But you have plenty of examples of the disastrous effects of building with a great many stones that have been used in London. One unfortunate result of architectural research in the past; people were taught, when the Gothic revival first came in, that in old days in London they used to build with that rough stone out of Kent, rubble walls and stone dressings; so that there are heaps of Gothic churches of that date about the town, and it is almost a regular kind of sacramental word in the newspapers that criticise such matters: "built of Kentish rag-stone with Bath stone dressings," and the result is very dismal on all hands. There is this wretched rag-stone, which was used at a time when there was no smoke in London, at a time when the inhabitants of London petitioned Edward the First against the introduction of pit-coal into London because it dirtied the houses; whereas nowadays no one

seems inclined to petition against the introduction of smoke: and there it is; it blackens the rough rag-stone, and the sulphuric acid in the atmosphere utterly destroys the oolite limestone of Bath.

Now as for stone building, clearly in London one wants a smooth stone building, and if one cannot get a smooth stone building it seems to me that the next best thing is to have a building of good bricks; but I suppose the very words that I have mentioned, good bricks, are enough to raise up visions of all sorts of trouble and bother which architects here have in trying to get these good bricks; and I must say that in building with good bricks in London (if only you can get good bricks), I should like to see places built of good bricks, and entirely built of brick, with no attempt to add anything else to them. I think, as a rule, that is really all one wants in big towns. One has seen examples of exactly the contrary sort of work. Take for example the big Municipal Buildings in Manchester, built partly of brick and partly with freestone dressings, and so on. The freestone dressings are now getting a horrible dirty drab black, worse than a mere black, and the whole result is that whatever architecture there may be in the building is pretty much destroyed and obliterated by the dirt. If the building had been built entirely of brick it would have preserved its character; it would have got all darker together, and would have preserved its own outlines right away to the end, and, although you might have regretted the dustiness and dreariness of its blackening, yet still you would have had the real outline of the building, not confused with all this growing and obviously unavoidable dirt that is actually collected about it.

As to bricks, it is quite clear that we ought to

make rather more efforts than are made to get the bricks better adapted to their work. I spoke just now about Broseley tiles. Just call to your memory the ordinary villages in the Midland counties of England, which I suppose were once pretty places. They are no longer pretty places at all. There are two reasons why they are ugly now; because the buildings, whatever they once were, have almost entirely given place to buildings built of the Midland county bricks, which are great big, stumpy, lumpy blocks of clay, a very bad colour as a rule; "excellent material" I believe builders would call them; and they are all roofed with these Staffordshire tiles, the worst peculiarity of which is that they never weather to a decent colour; a few months after they are put up they get a vile dirty sort of black colour, even in the country; it is not merely the smoke; and at that black colour they stick to the end of the chapter.

Well, I cannot go very much further than that, as far as the stone goes. To build country fashion in the country if possible would certainly be my advice, and in the town to do what you best can; to look the thing fairly and squarely in the face, and see what you can do to prevent your fine architecture from being made sheer nonsense.

The other material that I mentioned, the one that came second in my list of good materials, wood, is I suppose (I am speaking now of walls) a thing which cannot often be used nowadays. It seems to me to be mainly because you can no longer use wood as a material for a wall as frankly as it used to be used in mediæval times, when good oak was almost a drug in the market. To build wooden houses with the framing of small dimensions seems to me one of the poorest things one

can possibly do. You want, in point of fact, in order to build a satisfactory wooden house, to be able to indulge in the greatest possible generosity of material, to have no sparing whatever, or else your wooden house will look like nothing but a feeble attempt to imitate the results of the architecture of the past. So that, after all, in spite of my great liking for wood, for I think there is nothing more beautiful than a beautiful wooden house, I am afraid we must at present put the use of wood clean out of the question. We cannot build a house with wooden walls at present; the main material that walls must be built of nowadays is brick, and, therefore, again, I urge all architects to do the utmost they possibly can to get their bricks as well made and as well shaped as they can, that is to say, as long as possible and as narrow as possible, and to build them with wide joints of the very best mortar.

Now there is, by the way, another kindred material to brick, and that is the cast brick they call terra-cotta. I cannot abide it, I must say. I do not think I need treat it any further, and I will tell you why. It is used for nothing else except ornament, and I am rather inclined to think that of all things not wanted at the present day, and especially in London outside a house, the thing that is least wanted is ornament. That is to say, as long as there is a huge congeries of houses, as in London, the greater part of which are lamentably and hideously ugly, I think one ought to pitch one's note rather low, and try, if one can manage it, to get the houses and buildings to look solid and reasonable, and to impress people with their obvious adaptation to their uses; where they can be made big to make them big, and not to bother about ornament. Such ornament as

there is, to keep it for the inside, where at all events it can be treated with delicacy, and you do not feel that you have something which after all, whatever value there is in it as ornament, will presently disappear, and you simply get something which is of no particular use, except for collecting dirt. You know perfectly well how that cast stuff is generally used; I noticed some as I came along just now, and I said to myself: After all, these things are not a bit like cast work, or moulded work at all; they look like a bad imitation of carved work. It has a fatal ease in the matter of ornamentation which makes the material, it seems to me, decidedly bad for its purpose. I think it is very much better if you want to have brick ornament on a building to get cut and rubbed brick. From the point of view of ordinary practical and everyday use at the present time, I think it is hardly worth while in this country to talk about marble as a material; certainly not for the outside of a building. As a method of ornamenting wall surfaces on the inside marble is the most difficult material to use which it is possible to conceive. I do not know how it is, but unless it is used with the utmost skill, a skill which must, to be successful, be the result of many centuries of tradition—unless it is so used, the marble even in the inside does decidedly vulgarise the building, however beautiful it may be in itself.

Now we come to another point, which is the material of roofs; and this is, in a way, almost more important than the material of the walls of a building. First of all I have one thing to say, which is this. I am not tyrannically disposed, nor given to inciting the Government in its attempt to deal with the morals and feelings of its subjects; but I should be really rather glad,

although I should not like to have a hand in it, if some Government were to forbid entirely the use of Welsh slates. If the Welsh slate quarries could be shut up by Act of Parliament, or by whatever may be stronger than an Act of Parliament, I think I myself should have a very good sleep, and a happy getting up in the morning afterwards. In point of fact, I think all architects ought to make up their minds to one thing, that the use of these Welsh slates does distinctly stamp a building as being merely the exhibition of the very depth of poverty. If you are so poor that you cannot help using Welsh slates, then use them, but in that case say to your client: I cannot under these circumstances degrade myself by attempting to make this building ornamental. It is not the work of an architect at all, it is simply a trumpery makeshift which is to be removed as soon as you have a little money; consequently I refuse to put any ornament on it; I will not have so much as a moulding of any kind. Here you have a shed (a very ugly shed, you ought to add); you know after all it is perfectly possible for a shed to be put up with no ornament at all which shall be a very beautiful thing, but I am afraid it is impossible to have architecture with these thin slates. Of course it is perfectly true that there are some beautiful buildings covered with these thin slates, but then I think one always looks at that as a mere blemish to be removed. One can conceive that the building, which is now roofed with slate, once was not roofed with slate, and one supposes it away, or else one would be so disgusted at the sight of it that one could hardly bear to look at the building at all. So that, I think, is the first thing to be thought of by all architects. How shall we possibly be able to manage not to roof our building,

however little there is to be spent upon it, with these miserable thin slates? Just consider the effect in places you have seen that comes of the use of a material that is better than ordinary slate. I have before my mind's eye now some of those big squares in Edinburgh for example. They are a very uninteresting set of buildings there, by no means exhilarating, yet the fact that they are most of them covered with something better than ordinary thin slate decidedly gives them a kind of pleasantness, and even a kind of dignity that they would not otherwise possess. You look out of your window in the morning from a portion of the city high up over the roofs; you look down upon them, and instead of giving you a pain in the stomach they really give you a certain kind of pleasure. There are a lot of these things all tumbled together, and they have a certain kind of interest in them, and the covering of them is after all tolerable. Of course it is possible, even in Wales, to roof things with something better than the ordinary slates that are used; because you may notice that in the little bits of cottages and farmhouses where there is no attempt at any sort of architecture, although the colour of the slates is not pleasant, yet they do not look quite so bad as they otherwise would, simply because the slates are a good thickness, and because they are chipped at the edges; being, I suppose, the waste of the quarries, and as the result they look pretty well.

I have often spoken to architects about this, and I find even architects who ought to know the merits of them are rather shy of using them. They give very excellent reasons, no doubt; the first, that if you have these heavy stone slates you must have your timbers on the roof heavy. Very well, I should say in answer to

that; if the roofs are not heavy enough to carry stone slates properly, they are not heavy enough to be roofs at all. You want that scantling of timber to make the roof really lasting, and this would enable it to carry stone slates perfectly easily. The other reasons, I suppose, for their not using them are constructional reasons, which perhaps resolve themselves into this; that it wants considerable care in selecting the slates, and that the quarrymen who sell the slates are naturally more anxious for the slates to be sold than for the roof to endure; and as a consequence it often turns out that they shove off on people bad wares. I cannot help thinking that with greater pains a great deal might be done in those countrysides where stone slates may be used. Take for example the city of Oxford, which is such a lamentable example of all kinds of architectural errors and mistakes, and I might almost say crimes. There, some time ago, when they were roofing the new buildings which I am very sorry to say they built there, like Exeter College Chapel, they roofed them with stone slates. The stone slates, they found, year by year began to decay, and all went to the natural limestone dust. The result was they stripped the roofs and stuck green Westmoreland slates on. A very good thing is a green Westmoreland slate, it is said; and so it is in London on a red brick building, but on a grey stone building in Oxford it looks absolutely horrible. That is a very good example of the influence of material on architecture. Roof-coverings that do perfectly well in a certain style and in a certain place are most objectionable in another kind of style and in another place; and it seems to me perfectly clear that if all the colleges in Oxford had formed a committee to arrange about the roof-

covering materials of their colleges, they might very easily have got almost into their pockets certain quarries in the neighbourhood or the neighbouring counties, and the result would have been that they might have got a continuous steady supply of the very best stone slates, which would have covered their buildings for hundreds of years, because the thing once started would have gone on. But they were so careless that they did not trouble themselves about it. It was also rather cheaper to roof the buildings with Westmoreland slates than with stone slates. University College, for example, saved the college the enormous sum of thirty pounds, I believe, in roofing the whole with the thin slates instead of the good ones. I must not dwell too long upon it, but I do earnestly direct your attention as architects to that matter of the roofing material, and especially where possible to get the people to raise some kind of demand for these stone slates. In our own immediate country we used to get slates from a village called Poulton, between Fairford and Cirencester. The Poulton slates were remarkably good at one time, but they are now going off, and all you can get now from Poulton is a sort of coagulated mud which is clearly not to be trusted as a roofing material, although it is nothing like as bad to look at as blue slates, or slates of that kind ; and it is rather a hard slate, but it is not thoroughly satisfactory. I have not the slightest doubt that if two or three of the people about there, like the big landowner in my neighbourhood, who is a great patron of the arts and so on, would make an effort and demand these stone slates of a good bed, they would get them ; because it would be worth people's while to open the quarries, and at a slight additional expense they might get them from

countrysides which are not very remote; but what one sees going on there always is the perpetual worsening, especially in the roofing material of the buildings. It is rather remarkable that they still go on building stone walls for cart-sheds and all sorts of farm buildings, which, as far as the walls are concerned, are not so very bad, especially when they do not want them to be grand, and do not point them in a hideous manner; but the roofing is almost certain nowadays to be either thin blue slate or else that zinc-looking stuff. On the whole, I rather prefer that to blue slate, because you feel you can take it all off in a lump, and shove it on one side.

As to the use of thatch, I wish you could use it more often than you do. It is used so little that there are now very few thatchers to be got. In fact it is the commonest thing, if you ask a person to do something, to cast lead for example, to hear: "I do not know how to do it; I cannot do it; my grandfather used to be able to do it." That is not at all an uncommon thing, and that is the road things are going. In point of fact, what has happened there is what happens in other ways, that the town has practically entirely invaded the country, and the countryside is now treated as a kind of back-yard of the counting-house. That is the fact of the matter, and everything is going down-hill as far as the exterior appearance is concerned. There is an agitation on foot just now about getting better houses for the agricultural labourers; but people will have to take great care that instead of getting better houses they do not get worse, which they are very likely to do at the rate they are going now. Some of you must have gone into those villages in Northamptonshire where there are some splendid examples of the old churches, and where the building

material is very good; there is, for instance, that stone with an irony cast in it. In those villages you will see that a thing has happened which makes them the most miserable places you can see in the whole country. All the back gardens and yards have been built over with nasty little brick houses with blue slate roofs for the shoe-making trades, and so on. I cannot think that this improves the lodging of the country people, for the building is of the vilest possible description.

To sum up about this roofing material; it seems to me, you have really first of all lead for a good roof-covering; then you have stone slates; you have thatch, and you may have, with some trouble, a good country-made tile. This is an extremely difficult thing to get, mind you, because unfortunately the Broseley tiles are so largely used as an "excellent building material," that the country potters have got worse and worse, and the tiles they provide you with will hardly keep out the wet. That again is another thing that wants a sort of combination of people who have to do with building to insist, as far as they can, on having this material turned out as good as it possibly can be turned out, and to be always worrying and thinking about these things. Well, the tile of course is again a very serious affair, because over a large part of the country tiles, if you could get them good, are the most convenient roof-covering you can have. When they are good they are very pretty in their own countryside, but I must say I have seen them on what I should call a grey stone countryside, and there I think the tiles even when good are a kind of blight on the landscape. The beautiful greyness of the stone slate, the lovely tone of these old stone houses are better especially for the home-like landscape you see in that part of the

country, than anything that could take its place; it would be a misfortune if you had to use tiles rather than the old stone roofs. But in other parts of the country, tiles would do very well, especially if you have good tiles that weather properly, like some of the old tiles in Kent and Sussex.

But there is one last material, which I suppose there might be a difficulty about getting a man to accept, but which would be a very good material to use for roof-covering if it can be used in default of other things; and that is oak shingles, which get in very few years to look much the same colour as the stone slates, and the roof and the walls go grey together.

The good materials are then, first lead, if you must or may use it, then stone slates, then tiles, then thatch, and lastly, when you can use it, shingles. The bad materials, which nobody ought to use on pain of not being considered an architect at all, are thin slates and Broseley tiles. I can hardly consider that on an architect's building the use of these materials is a mere blemish; I look upon it rather as a destruction of the whole building as a work of art.

It seems to me that I have given you pretty well all I had to say on the subject of those rough and homely materials that go to make up our houses. I repeat again, I think it is the most important side of architecture altogether, the choice of material and the use of material. There is another thing to be said about it, that it must lead those people who are really seriously interested in it to interest themselves in the methods of using those materials. That has to do especially with matters like masonry. How does it happen, for example, that a restored building (excuse my mentioning that word)

which is very carefully done as to the mouldings and all the rest of it, and is really an absolutely faultless imitation of an Edwardian building, does not look in the faintest degree like an Edwardian building? Many people would say: Because it has got to get old and grey; now it is all new. But I beg to say that is all nonsense; the Edwardian building when brand new did not look like this imitation of the present day. There is no doubt about that, and the reason why it did not look like it is that the whole surface, every moulding, every inch of rubble wall, and what not, was done in a totally different manner; that is to say, the old workmen who did it used to a great extent different tools, and certainly used the tools in a different way. Now if by any possibility the architects could get back the masons and workmen, and what I distinctly call the old scientific method of building walls and surfaces, the really reasonable and scientific method, architecture would to a great extent be on its legs again, and we need not trouble ourselves much about the battle of the styles, if buildings were built in that living manner from beginning to end; out of that the style would arise. We all know of course that you cannot begin by inventing anew, but by attending distinctly to the necessities of the time, and starting at some period, and you must start—you cannot help yourselves—at some period long ago when the art really had roots in it and was not all in the air. Starting with that and attending to the absolute needs of the people who want houses built, and connected with that, with the real solid and genuine use of the material, you would at least get a style which, whatever one may say of it, although it may not build such beautiful buildings as the old buildings, because the

whole history of the world has so much changed, would nevertheless produce buildings which would not be ridiculous to the ages which come after us. I am afraid many of those we are building now will be looked upon as mere ingenious toys reflecting a great deal of credit perhaps on the intellect of those who designed them, but very little credit on their good sense and their solidity. You will say that the man was very clever, but he had terrible difficulties to overcome, and he did in a way overcome them after all. But what he has produced, at the very best, is not a building which really forms part of the living shell and skin of the earth on which we live, but is a mere excrescence upon it, a toy which might almost as well, except for the absolute necessity that the people should have a roof to cover them, have remained simply a nicely executed drawing in the architect's office. What we have to get rid of is especially and particularly that. I suppose that the draughtsmanship of the architects of the thirteenth century for their grander buildings was not particularly splendid or complete; I am perfectly certain that a vast number of very beautiful buildings that are built all over the country never had an architect at all, but the roughest possible draught was made out for those buildings, and that they actually grew up simply without any intermediary between the mind and the hands of the people who actually built them. No doubt the great reason why that was so was because the people who built them were traditionally acquainted with the best means of using the materials which happily for them they were forced to use; the materials that were all round about them in the fields and woods amidst which they passed their lives.

XI

ON THE EXTERNAL COVERINGS OF ROOFS

WRITTEN FOR THE SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF ANCIENT BUILDINGS

THERE is nothing more important in the aspect of the exterior of a building than the covering of its roof: for, broadly speaking, in these northern countries all buildings show a roof above their walls, and that roof being usually much less broken by change of material or ornament than the walls, its material is especially obvious to view. Moreover, the smaller and more unpretentious a building is, the more effect the roof has in producing a pleasant-looking building: so that if the roofs of the many thousands of small houses throughout the country were of beautiful materials, we should have to-day comparatively little to complain of, and especially the beautiful landscape of the countrysides in England would escape the marring which it now almost always receives from ordinary modern houses. This should be well known and constantly acted on by all those who wish to produce beautiful or sightly building, but unfortunately there is nothing which is more generally neglected by architects nowadays than this question of roof-coverings: while on the other hand the ease of

carriage has made inferior materials so cheap, that everywhere mere utilitarian buildings stand little chance of escaping the roof of thin Welsh blue slates or Staffordshire "improved" tiles.

Now in the Middle Ages (or indeed down to the end of the eighteenth century) all roof-coverings were more or less good. Lead (properly cast and of a due thickness), oak shingles, well-made red tiles, which weathered beautifully, straw or reed thatch, stone slates or slabs, or at the worst slates smaller, thicker, and less mechanically dressed than those now in use, made it almost impossible for a roof to be really ugly, and more often insured its being actually beautiful. The older parts of Edinburgh, for instance, owe much of their good looks to the houses being roofed with small, thick, dark-coloured slates, and wherever we come across one of the old houses where these have been supplanted by modern thin slates, an obvious disastrous hole in the line of houses is the result. Again, how much of the charm of the pattern old English villages is (one must say almost was, so fast are they disappearing) due to their thatched roofs, which look always the better, the neater and trimmer they are kept. The same thing may be said of numberless little buildings in the various districts of England, such as Yorkshire, Derbyshire, Northamptonshire, Gloucestershire, and the western parts of Oxfordshire and Berkshire, in which stone slabs or beautiful stone slates were universally used till about sixty years ago: many of these farmhouses, cottages, and barns, &c., being quite destitute of any ornament, but unfailingly beautiful, because of the material of their roofs. The contrast between the old and the new

in this respect may well be noted in the old villages of Northamptonshire; Rothwell, for example, where the old cottages are worthy fellows to the magnificent mediæval church, and seem, so to say, to have grown out of the ground by the same process as it has, while modern sordidness and brutality have covered the sites of the cottage gardens with blue-slated abortions built as mansties for the poor shoe-makers who now largely people the place. With the mere utilitarian element it is difficult for our Society to deal, especially as this side of the subject has only an indirect influence upon the preservation of ancient buildings; smallness of immediate cost will, in spite of anything we can say, determine the use of the abominable blue slates in most such cases; but we would at least appeal to the architects, and guardians of old buildings, and ask them to consider what a great stretch of material, good or bad, a high-pitched roof makes, and what a difference there is between good and bad in this matter; the bad such a perpetual eyesore, that it keeps one from enjoying the old work, and almost brings it under the category of a ruin (that is, makes it a mutilated building, interesting more as an archæological study than a work of art); the good of itself beautiful, and furthermore harmonious with the ancient walls and gables. We ask all who have to do with repairing old buildings to consider it not so much undesirable as impossible to supplant a good roof-covering by a bad one; to consider it impossible that Broseley tiles can be used in place of good well-weathering old tiles; that neither slates, green or blue, nor tiles, can possibly take the place of stone slabs or stone slates on any buildings with which they have anything to do.

Furthermore, though, as above said, it may seem out of our province to speak of any modern buildings, yet we claim an old village as a unit of ancient building, and we earnestly beg any one who is putting up a necessary new building in such a place to do the like; one or two incongruous roofs of the kind we are thinking of will destroy the greater part of the beauty of the whole village, and miles of lovely landscape with it; and there are many villages in which the well-meant efforts of a landowner (as interpreted by his steward), in trying to better the dwellings of the village, have resulted in taking away all the beauty and character from the country dwelling-place, and making it as ugly and unmeaning as the Squire's own sham classic or sham baronial mansion. It is the same with these old villages as with a great Gothic church: if the old cottages, barns, and the like, are kept in good repair from year to year, they will not need to be pulled down to give place either to the red-brick blue-slated man-sty, or the model modern-Tudor lord-bountiful cottage. And where, as aforesaid, new buildings must be built, by building them well, and in a common-sense and unpretentious way, with the good material of the countryside, they will take their place alongside of the old houses and look, like them, a real growth of the soil.

We think it well in conclusion to make our meaning in this necessarily brief space clearer by adding a list of the good roof-coverings side by side with the bad; premising always that if any regard is to be had to the general beauty of the landscape, the natural material of the special countryside should be used instead of imported material.

ON THE EXTERNAL COVERINGS OF ROOFS

Good Roof-Coverings	Bad Roof-Coverings
Cast Lead (of course for expensive and stately buildings).	Milled Lead.
Oak Shingles (once universal in woodland countries).	
Good Hand-made Well-Baked Plain Tiles.	Broseley Mechanically-made Tiles (thin, brittle, always weathering ugly).
Good Pantiles (as in many old farm buildings and sheds near London).	
Stone Slabs (as in Yorkshire, Derbyshire, &c.).	
Stone Slates (as in Gloucestershire, Oxfordshire, Berks, North Lincolnshire, &c. These when good make the most beautiful of any roof-covering).	Thin Welsh Blue Slates (one of the greatest curses of the age).
Green Westmoreland Slates (mostly to be used in towns and with brick buildings).	
Grey and Dark-Grey Slates (as in parts of Scotland, North France, &c., but these are small and thick).	Corrugated Galvanised Iron and Zinc (now spreading like a pestilence over the country).
Thatch, Straw and Reed (the latter very enduring and much preferable to the straw).	

Printed by Ballantyne, Hanson & Co.
Edinburgh & London